

Ekeus in Iraq for talks to end embargo

BAGHDAD (R) — A senior United Nations envoy arrived in Baghdad Friday for disarmament talks which if successful could lead to lifting the oil embargo on Iraq. Rolf Ekeus, chairman of the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) disarming Iraq under 1991 Gulf war ceasefire terms, said lifting of sanctions depended on the success of his talks with Iraqi officials. "We'll talk now. We don't know what will be the outcome of the talks," Mr. Ekeus told reporters when asked about a possible lifting of sanctions. He said a decision to ease or remove the more than three-year-old regime of sanctions on Baghdad was not easy. "It is quite a complex issue. I would wait a little to comment on that. I do not want to be specific," he said. Mr. Ekeus said earlier in Baghdad that the regional base for U.N. inspectors, that sanctions could be lifted in six months if Baghdad fully complied with demands. Asked by a reporter there when sanctions would be lifted, he replied: "I said that in my report to the Security Council on Sept. 10. Six months might be a realistic assessment of the time." If Iraq is truthful... if Iraq is honest it will be possible. I think it will.

Jordan Times

Amman, Jordan Arab political daily Jordan Press Foundation
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Donors pledge nearly \$2b for Palestinian self-rule

Combined agency dispatches

WASHINGTON — Urged by the United States to "seize the moment," delegates from 43 countries pledged nearly \$2 billion Friday to bankroll Palestinians as they prepare to take over administrative charge of the occupied Gaza Strip and part of the occupied West Bank from Israel.

At the close of a conference of donor nations, U.S. treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen said he was confident the total ultimately would exceed the \$2.4 billion the World Bank has said is needed to develop the West Bank and Gaza Strip over the next five years.

"We all realize that the people on the ground have to see the results of this agreement," said Secretary of State Warren Christopher.

He called the meeting a "striking success" and said the turnout reflected "the new political landscape and the new sense of optimism that has emerged in the Middle East."

The World Bank and a Palestinian steering committee will play roles in managing dispersal of the assistance while the United Nations will take charge of immediate relief needs. Organizers of the conference were hard-pressed, however, to describe the operation in any detail.

Mr. Christopher told donors the agreement on Palestinian self-rule signed last month at the White House "challenges all of us to seize the moment."

He brushed aside, meanwhile, questions about the Arabs' refusal to end their economic boycott of Israel. "We have enough to do to carry out this major task," he said.

A senior U.S. official told reporters Thursday in New York, after Mr. Christopher had met with a dozen Arab leaders, that not one Arab state had agreed to abandon the boycott.

Mr. Bentsen said the 43 countries and 47 delegations attending the five-hour conference had pledged more than \$600 million for the first year while commitments approaching \$2 billion had been received for five years.

Among the pledges was \$100 million from Saudi Arabia.

"People on the ground have to see the results of this agreement," Mr. Christopher told a press conference after the aid meeting.

"We are prepared to do our part," Mr. Gore said in opening the conference. "The United States anticipates contributing \$500 million over the next five years to help meet the economic needs associated with implementing the Israeli-Palestinian agreement."

Israel, which less than two weeks ago recognized the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), pledged \$25 million in grants and \$50 million in credits.

(Continued on page 5)

Prince Hassan meets Peres; tripartite group announced Crown Prince reaffirms vision of peace

Combined agency dispatches

WASHINGTON — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan on Friday met at the White House with Israel Foreign Minister Shimon Peres in a meeting hosted by U.S. President Bill Clinton in what was seen as another major diplomatic breakthrough after the signing of the ground-breaking Israeli-Palestinian autonomy agreement last month.

They announced after the meeting the creation of a Jordanian-American-Israeli working group to advance regional economic development.

In a brief statement to the press, Mr. Clinton thanked both Prince Hassan and Mr. Peres for accepting his invitation to the meeting and underlined "the importance the U.S. attaches to Jordan's critical role in achieving a lasting peace."

Crown Prince Hassan, who shook hands with Mr. Peres, told reporters: "There is much to be done. We have to commit ourselves to a work ethic for peace."

Mr. Peres said Israel and

Jordan shared a Biblical history and many traditions, and added: "What we want to do is to translate a great historic tradition into a new economic endeavour."

"It is a very moving occasion for our people, and I hope for the rest of the Middle East."

A White House spokeswoman said the meeting underlined the administration's efforts to build upon the agreement last month between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) on five years of interim autonomy in the Israeli-occupied territories pending final status negotiations in the third year.

On Sept. 14, one day after the PLO and Israel signed the accord, Jordan and Israel signed an agenda outlining the principles for a peace agreement.

The economic working group announced Friday is expected to be served as a vehicle for Jordan to involve itself in the Palestinian economy envisaged in the occupied territories under the accord and contribute to regional economic development.

Reporting from the White House.

meeting, a press release from the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said: "His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan met today with President Clinton at the invitation of the president, where he delivered a message from His Majesty King Hussein."

"The Crown Prince and the president were joined at a later stage, also upon the invitation of the president, by Mr. Shimon Peres, foreign minister of Israel. During the meeting, His Royal Highness stressed Jordan's commitment to Arab rights in the peace process, as reflected in the Jordanian-Israeli agenda."

"Discussion also specifically dealt with the refugees' right of return and compensation guaranteed by international legitimacy and U.N. resolutions. The meeting also addressed the Palestinian-Israeli declaration of principles, stressing the importance of working out modalities for implementation within the agreed timetable in order to reach a just peace based on the full restoration of rights and the end of occupation."

(Continued on page 5)



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan speaks President Bill Clinton (centre) and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres look on (AFP photo)

'Jordan needs support to shoulder its responsibilities for better region'

Following is the full text of an address made by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan at Friday's meeting in Washington of donors on support to Middle East peace:

Mr. Chairman, in two hours, the conference to support Middle East peace will be over, and we will walk away from this room. Those whose lives will evermore be changed by our decisions cannot walk away. On the streets of Amman and Tel Aviv, in

the mosques, churches and synagogues of Jerusalem, in the refugee camps of Al Shati near Gaza and Al Dheisheh by Bethlehem, the story of peace is just beginning.

Jordan welcomes this conference. It is pragmatic to determine how the fruits of

peace can be enjoyed by the peoples of the Middle East, and timely in view of the gathering momentum towards a just and comprehensive settlement.

Jordan supports the PLO-Israeli accord as a significant step on the road to regional reconciliation. Indeed, we had already agreed an agenda

(Continued on page 5)

Assad, Hrawi meet

DAMASCUS (AFP) — Syrian President Hafez Al Assad met here Friday with his Lebanese counterpart Elias Hrawi to discuss the Middle East peace process, presidential spokesman Jibril Kuriyeh said. The spokesman said Mr. Assad and Mr. Hrawi had talked about "the Middle East peace process and questions arising from it." Mr. Hrawi, who arrived in the Syrian capital early Friday, held a one-on-one discussion with Mr. Assad before they were joined by Syrian Vice President Abdul Halim Khaddam, Prime Minister Mahmoud Al Zoubi and Chief of Staff Hikmat Shenabi, Mr. Kuriyeh said.

4 Israelis wounded as mine explodes

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Four Israeli civilians were wounded Friday, one of them seriously, when they detonated a recently planted landmine as they walked in a field in south Jerusalem, police said. The most seriously injured victim lost a leg after treading on the mine, which was recently dug up by unknown attackers from a sealed-off minefield and replanted, police said. The three other casualties, all from the same family, received shrapnel wounds, police said.

Police recruits head for Egypt

GAZA CITY, occupied Gaza Strip (AFP) — A new group of 52 recruits, most of them lawyers, left here Friday for Egypt to train as Palestinian police officers, the head of the future force in Gaza said. In addition to 43 lawyers the recruits also comprise four engineers and three doctors. After a three-month course they were expected to become police lieutenants, Ibrahim Muhanna said. Egypt and Jordan are training Palestinians for a police force will be deployed in the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho, after they receive autonomy on Oct. 13. A first batch of 25 recruits left Gaza for Egypt on Sept. 15 while another group went for Jordan from Jericho. Mr. Muhanna said that two-year training programmes for officers will soon be set up while courses for women only would start next week.

30,000 feared dead in Indian quake

Combined agency dispatches

KHILLARI — Heavy rains on Friday hit rescue efforts under way in quake-ravaged western India as thousands of victims of the stunning calamity were cremated in mass funerals here.

Thunderstorms lashed the region, drenching villages and towns flattened by Thursday's pre-dawn tremor, which an opposition leader said could have killed as many as 30,000 people in the state of Maharashtra.

It was the worst quake to hit the subcontinent in nearly 60 years.

Hundreds of villagers spent the second consecutive night in the open, huddled in makeshift camps and buildings still left standing. Many huddled under trees or in the open, looking numb.

Authorities organised mass cremations, frantically disposing of bodies extricated from tonnes of debris in the small

towns of Khillari and Umarga, and several neighbouring villages.

Funeral pyres burned everywhere, leading an eerie appearance to the region which has gone without electricity since the quake struck.

"We are overwhelmed," said a weary Praveen Pardesi, the area's senior-most administrator. "There is not a single village which has been cleared fully of debris."

The Press Trust of India (PTI) and state-run television reported that the death count from the earthquake, measuring 6.4 on the Richter scale, was more than 21,000 but could go up to 28,000.

A leader of Maharashtra's main opposition party, Dhananjay Chaudhari, told AFP in Bombay that the death toll could be as high as 30,000. "In eight of the villages, 80 per cent of the population has perished."

Government officials in

Bombay, the Maharashtra capital some 400 kilometres west of here, claimed that toll was barely 10,000, but admitted that it could be more.

"God alone knows how many died," one police officer said.

The Indian army took over relief operations Friday in the quake-hit region as hospitals here fought to cope with the sheer number of the injured.

The army set up barricades around villages and towns flattened by the tremor as soldiers began digging out bodies and ferried the injured to military clinics, witnesses said.

"We have sent in two brigades (5,000 men) and we are rushing in more troops," an army spokesman said as helicopters airlifted three tonnes of medicines and brought in three hospitals on wheels to the ravaged districts.

Heavy earth-moving excavators and bulldozers began sifting through the rubble Friday

in dozens of flattened villages and two razed towns, replacing rescuers who had clawed with bare hands for trapped victims a day earlier.

Infantrymen joined the search amid fears that scores of people were still buried alive in the debris of their clay-and-stone homes in Khillari and Umarga, the two townships completely wrecked by the powerful tremor.

Expressions of sympathy and offers of help poured in from around the world.

Among early donors were Australia, which offered 500,000 (\$325,000) in relief aid, and Japan, which gave 25,000; while the United Nations also vowed its support.

"The earthquake in the state of Maharashtra is one of the worst international disasters in decades," Australian Development Cooperation Minister Gordon Bilney said in Sydney.

(Continued on page 3)

Extent of liberalisation in focus after debate on pros and cons of poll delay

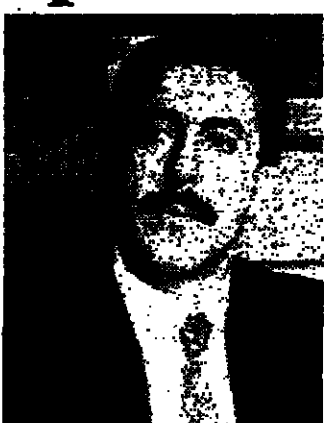
By Katharine Rath

AMMAN — Six weeks before parliamentary elections are set to take place, Jordan has experienced what amounted to be a major political battle between opponents and proponents of holding the elections as scheduled — a battle which, in the end, resulted in a victory for the supporters of "elections on time" option.

The PLO-Israeli agreement, which, when it was first announced, came as a shock to Jordan, threatened to change radically the political situation in the country as the leadership was reconsidering its policy options both internally and on the regional level.

But the recent developments have turned the spotlight mainly on Jordan's process of democratisation and has raised important questions on how far Jordan's political liberalisation can go, or allow itself to be retarded, in light of the new situation.

His Majesty King Hussein has pledged that under no circumstances would he allow the march towards democracy to be reversed. At a meet-



Abdul Karim Kabariti

ing with prominent journalists and writers last month, he said that "protecting democracy is a commitment and a duty and a march on a direction from which there is no going back."

But while some analysts and observers argued that a postponement of election would have been equivalent to a setback for democracy in Jordan, others contended that it would not have affected the process in a negative way.

Former cabinet minister and deputy from Aqaba Abdul Karim Kabariti did



Taber Hikmat

not see a postponement as a threat to democracy. "I think that if elections were postponed, we should not jump to the conclusion that democracy was over, because I don't think that democracy is measured by the presence or absence of Parliament. For, in a sense, you can have a democracy without Parliament, and you can have a dictatorship with Parliament."

"If we look at the experience of the past four years,

Mr. Kabariti said "we can easily find examples where the King acted more democratically than Parliament. But this should not be mistaken for a preference on my part to have no Parliament. Not at all, I am only putting things into their proper perspective."

At the centre of the debate that followed the Sept. 13 agreement was the issue of Jordanians of Palestinian origin, who constitute half of the population, and their future role in the political life of the country, as well as the relationship between Jordan and a future Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza.

A major argument for delaying the parliamentary vote was that holding the elections at this crucial moment would seriously endanger Jordanian national unity. It was feared that the PLO-Israeli accord would be made the main issue in the election campaign and that this would lead to a disruption of the solidarity

(Continued on page 5)

The writer has done research work on democratisation in Jordan. She contributed this analysis to the Jordan Times.

Christopher planning Mideast mission, Syrian papers report

Combined agency dispatches

DAMASCUS — U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher will soon tour the Middle East to push forward the peace process, the Syrian official press reported Friday.

"The American administration will dispatch Secretary of State Warren Christopher to the Middle East to secure the important peace breakthrough," Al Baath, organ of the ruling Baath Party, said in a front-page story.

"The administration of President Bill Clinton is thus demonstrating it is convinced that the region needs a just and comprehensive peace, not separate agreements," it said.

Another daily, Al Thawra, said Mr. Christopher was preparing for a new tour to advance the Middle East peace process.

The papers also quoted Syrian Foreign Minister Farouq Al Sharaa as saying, "we cannot say that peace has been established before the end of the Israeli occupation of all the occupied Arab territories."

Syria has criticised the Palestine Liberation Organisation

(PLO)-Israel autonomy accord signed in Washington on Sept. 13.

Mr. Christopher has been considering a trip to the region next week but a senior U.S. official said privately that it had been postponed at least until November.

Mr. Christopher himself, asked about travel plans on Wednesday, said: "I think that we have a period of time while we're adjusting to this new reality. I'll be ready to go back to the region and serve the parties whenever they are ready to have me do so."

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak said meanwhile he expected a breakthrough towards peace between Syria and Israel within months, not weeks.

He told the semi-official newspaper Al Ahram that Egypt's 1979 peace treaty with Israel set a precedent for the deal that could be done: Total Israeli withdrawal from territories occupied in the 1967 Middle East war in return for security arrangements and peaceful relations.

Mr. Mubarak also signalled in the interview published on

Friday that Israel should not insist too hard on what peaceful relations would mean in practice — its key demand from Syria in return for withdrawal.

The president has been trying to keep Syrian-Israeli peace talks moving despite Israel's wish for a pause after signing the autonomy agreement with the Palestinians. He has met both Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Syria President Hafez Al Assad since the signing.

Mr. Mubarak said he told Mr. Rabin that the Israeli-Palestinian accord made agreement with Syria more urgent. He added that what he heard from Mr. Assad "strengthened my belief that an agreement can be reached in a reasonable, not long, period of time."

But he said: "This does not mean that an agreement between Syria and Israel is imminent or can be reached within weeks, or that I obtained any definite undertaking or commitment from either side in this regard."

He added: "What I want to

(Continued on page 5)

Talks fail to end Russian crisis

Combined agency dispatches

MOSCOW — Talks between the Kremlin and rebel lawmakers failed to produce a breakthrough Friday towards ending Russia's political crisis as President Boris Yeltsin demanded parliament disband prior to any compromise deal.

"I have the feeling that they don't need this negotiation process," Mr. Yeltsin's chief of staff, Sergei Filatov, said at a news conference following a day of talks with representatives from the rebel parliament.

His remarks came after both sides in the crisis, after timid moves towards compromise, appeared to retreat to earlier hardline positions, notably on the issue of weaponry possessed by the defenders of the parliament.

"All negotiations — all — must begin with the handover of arms," Mr. Yeltsin said in an interview broadcast on Commonwealth of Independent States television news. Alexander Rutskoi, the "president" named by parlia-

ment, said the weapons could be turned over only after the blockade of parliament lifted and troops enforcing it sent out of Moscow, the parliament's "White House" news service said.

Government authorities, acting on an accord concluded overnight, restored electricity and limited phone service to the parliament building and deputies were in higher spirits, viewing the move a sign of Kremlin weakness.

The speaker of the besieged parliament, Ruslan Khasbulatov, claimed Russia's powerful regional governments were beginning to rally behind the dissolved legislature and appealed to the army to take a stand in the political crisis.

There were signs that deputies were split on compromise with the Kremlin, notably on the issue of disarming, and the Interior Ministry claimed armed defenders of the building were solely under the control of military leaders.

"Weapons are so dangerous, you understand, that any shot, however inadvertent, would be

a provocation which could lead to blood (being spilled)," Mr. Yeltsin said in the television interview. "This is unacceptable."

"Any talks can be opened only upon the surrender of weapons," Mr. Yeltsin said.

He said the deputies had failed to honour their side of an agreement under which they were to yield their weapons in exchange for electricity and other services being restored to the encircled parliament, which Mr. Yeltsin dissolved last week.

"I had hoped that last night common sense would prevail, that the negotiations would produce results," he said.

"The agreement was as follows: The mayor's office turns on the lights and they surrender their arms. The lights were turned on and they refused to give up the weapons. It is difficult (now) even to deal with them," he said.

Russia's supreme legislature rejected the overnight deal after its leaders denounced it.

Why Baghdad opposes the Israel-PLO autonomy agreement but will not fight it

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Iraq, a vocal opponent of the Israeli-Palestinian autonomy accord, will not engage in any action that would undermine the ground-breaking accord or the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), Iraqi and Palestinian diplomats say.

An Iraqi promise to this effect, confirmed by independent Arab political sources, has been made despite Iraqi state-run media attacks on the agreement. It marks a shift in the Iraqi stand, and appears to have been prompted by two key considerations:

— A realisation that continued opposition to the accord would only further infuriate the U.S. and diminish chances of an early lifting of the international sanctions imposed following the August 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

— Worry that Syria, a long-time ideological and political rival to Iraq, could gain from Baghdad's rejection of the accord.

The Iraqis believe that if they contribute to weakening the PLO leadership under Yasser Arafat then the only beneficiaries would be dissident Palestinian factions based in Damascus and through them the regime of Syrian President Hafez Al Assad.

The Iraqi position was conveyed by Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz, to Farouk Kaddoumi, head of the PLO's Political Department and de facto Palestinian "foreign minister" who visited Baghdad Sept. 14 and 15, said the diplomats who spoke to the Jordan Times on condition that they would not be identified.

Mr. Aziz, a close confidant of President Saddam Hussein, also promised that Iraq would not withdraw its troops, the Arab Liberation Front (ALF), from the decision-making Executive Committee of the PLO, they said. In fact, it was a reaffirmation of an announcement by the ALF that its representative in the PLO Executive Committee, Mahmoud Ismail who voted against the agreement in the committee, would not resign from the panel, as at least five others did in protest against the accord.

"But the Iraqi pledge to the PLO does not mean that (Baghdad) has abandoned its opposition to the Israel-PLO agreement," said an Iraqi diplomat. "We continue to reject it since we believe that the accord falls short of Palestinian aspirations to statehood."

Iraq cast the lone vote against Arab endorsement of the agreement, signed in Washington on Sept. 13, at a meeting of the Cairo-based, 21-member Arab League Foreign Ministers' Council. It was surprising when seen against the backdrop of "yes" votes from Syria and Libya, two other Arab countries which have criticised the accord.

"The vote was not different from the record of Iraq in the Arab League Council," said the diplomat. "It had always opposed all resolutions and decisions which it found as undermining or sacrificing Arab rights."

"Iraq adopted the same policy towards the Camp



Tariq Aziz



Farouk Kaddoumi

David agreements (between Egypt and Israel) and all other proposals which it felt did not fully meet with the minimum requirements of peace — the total and complete rights of the Palestinian people," he added.

The Iraqi media have kept up a torrent of attack against the agreement. Al Thawra, the organ of the ruling Arab Baath Socialist Party, called for a change in the PLO leadership under Chairman Yasser Arafat, in an ironic twist for the man who burnt his bridges with his bankrollers Saudi Arabia and Kuwait by supporting Iraq in the Gulf crisis of 1990-91.

A senior PLO source confirmed the Iraqi diplomat's account and added that Mr. Aziz also agreed to a PLO request to facilitate the transfer of Palestine Liberation Army (PLA) soldiers based in Iraq to Jordan for training as a Palestinian police force to be deployed in the occupied territories as part of the Israel-PLO accord.

The Israel-PLO agreement envisages an interim five-year period of Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The occupying power will withdraw its forces from the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho in four months and allow the Palestinians to administer the territories with autonomous powers.

The rest of the West Bank will remain under Israeli control but with a smaller measure of Palestinian self-rule. The final status of the territories will be determined in negotiations starting not later than the third year of autonomy.

Mr. Kaddoumi was among a handful of PLO Executive Committee members who opposed the agreement saying it did not address the Palestinian quest for statehood, the plight of the 3.5 million Palestinian refugees and the status of Jerusalem, which Israel claims as its "undivided and eternal capital."

The veteran PLO official refused to sign the accord on behalf of the PLO. He was on his way to Baghdad when the document was being signed at the White House.

Mahmoud Abbas, another PLO executive and architect of the accord, and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres signed the agreement.

The first words of Mr. Aziz when he met Mr. Kaddoumi was to the effect that Baghdad was unable to extend the kind of assistance that he was looking for, said the PLO source.

"Abu Lutf (Kaddoumi's nom de guerre) had to explain that despite his reservations over the agreement he had not abandoned his commitment to the PLO, and remained a soldier in the

Palestinian struggle," said the source. "Everyone in the PLO has a role to play," the source quoted Mr. Kaddoumi as telling Mr. Aziz.

Jordanian sources said Mr. Kaddoumi repeated the same words during a meeting with the Kingdom's prime minister, Abdul Salam Al Majali, upon his return to Amman after visiting Baghdad.

The comment boosts a belief in Palestinian political circles here that Mr. Kaddoumi's opposition to the accord was an orchestrated scenario agreed with Mr. Arafat. The scenario, according to those who propagate it, is that the PLO chairman wanted people whom he could trust waiting in the wings to any surge of hardliners who oppose him towards assuming control of the PLO if indeed something went wrong in the agreement with Israel.

According to the sources, Mr. Aziz told Mr. Kaddoumi that "the PLO had better not forget that if it was not for Iraq there would not have been any peace process in the region, and the Palestinians are now reaping the fruits of Iraq's sacrifices."

It was a direct reference to what Baghdad believes as the pressure it is under to bear upon the U.S. during the Gulf crisis by linking any solution to Iraq's occupation of Kuwait to an end to Israel's control of Arab territories seized in the 1967 Arab-Israeli war.

Washington rejected that argument and went ahead with expelling Iraq from Kuwait by force. But the entire crisis brought new focus to the decades-old Palestinian problem, as evidenced by Washington's leading role in launching the Middle East peace process with an international conference in Madrid, Spain, in October 1991, seven months after the war over Kuwait.

Independent Arab political sources believe that Iraq can ill-afford to run a campaign against the Israel-PLO accord since such a posture would further weaken chances of Washington relenting on its campaign to lift or ease the international sanctions. The political priority of Iraq, the sources say, is to address its mounting economic problems through a relaxation of the sanctions (Dennis Rose, the Clinton administration coordinator for the Middle East, said recently that while Washington would welcome an Iranian change of mind and involvement in the peace process, it found no room for Iraq as long as Saddam Hussein remained in power in Baghdad).

Baghdad can still use the ALF card against Mr. Arafat if it chooses to, the analysts

Iraqi backing for peace process quid pro quo for end to sanctions

Following is a column that economist Dr. Fahd Al Faneek wrote in the Al Rafi Arabic Language daily on Sept. 25, 1993.

IT IS TRUE that Iraq is currently isolated from the international arena and from the regimes of the Arab World. But most certainly it is not in isolation from the Arab masses. Iraq will continue to constitute an influencing Arab weight that can no by means be ignored or overlooked.

Iraq's position vis-a-vis Middle East peace is of paramount importance in the eyes of the man in the street of the Arab World because Iraq is the only Arab country which is totally free of American political influences.

As expected, Iraq has rejected the Arab League decision and did not bless the planned agreements with Israel concluded under U.S. sponsorship. Iraq has not approved of any move or any form of cooperation with any party as long as it remains under embargo on all fronts an embargo which is being implemented under U.S. influence and under the pretext of implementing unjust United Nations resolutions which are only applicable against Arab countries.

It should be clear that ruling out Iraq's role in the Middle East power balance or political influence, forcing the country to oppose peace agreements, is something that by no means can serve the Arab or Palestinian causes or the cause of peace in general. Such a situation is bound to cause an embarrassment to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), Syria and Jordan which are involved in the peace process.

Attracting Iraq to the peace process and involving Baghdad in pan-Arab decisions offer the best guarantee for the peace process. Also it should be noted that an all-out Arab support for the peace process is vital to back Jordan, Syria and the PLO which are taking a big risk in the course of their drive to establish a comprehensive peace.

In my belief, Iraq would adopt a very positive and understanding position towards the peace process in view of the current world circumstances, provided the Arab governments take a positive stand of Iraq's circumstances and provided that Arab states end the barbaric economic embargo being imposed on the Iraqi people and exercise pressure on the United States, which has an interest to have a comprehensive peace established in the whole region including Iraq. It is totally unacceptable to see Arab countries making peace with Israel before opening the door for reconciliation and cooperation with Iraq.

The PLO realises too well that Iraq remains its main backer in the Arab World and it is not in its interest to lose such support. Jordan realises that all the gains it would achieve as a result of the peace settlement with Israel would not outweigh its economic and political losses with Iraq, which is Jordan's strategic depth and a country on which Jordan pins so many future hopes. Furthermore, the Syrian ruling Baath Party would not be at ease if it took one step which the ruling Baath Party in Iraq might consider as a deviation from the national principled stand.

The United States which is obviously pulling all the strings should realise that it is in need of a positive Iraqi stand as much as Iraq is now in need for a termination of the economic embargo. Otherwise, no one can guess who would be besieging whom, should a cold war of political and media propaganda start, later on.

noted. The front, set up in the late 1960s, is actually an organ of the Baath Party. While an ALF departure from the PLO Executive Committee is not expected to have any major repercussions, it would add to the image of a deeply divided PLO, given the resignation of five other executives — independents Mahmoud Darwish and Shafiq Al Hout, Abu Ali Mustafa of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), Tayseer Khaled of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) and Abdullah Hourani (who is also believed to be pro-Iraqi).

Baghdad also hosts the Palestine Liberation Front (PLF), headed by Mohammad Abbas who rose to fame as the mastermind of the 1985 hijack of the Italian cruiser Achille Lauro off the Egyptian coast. Mr. Abbas, better known as Abu Abbas, lives in Baghdad, but he has support bases in other Arab countries.

(An aborted PLF attack on an Israeli beach in May 1990 led to the suspension of an 18-month American-PLO dialogue when Mr. Arafat refused to adopt punitive measures against Abu Abbas. The dialogue was restored with the signing of the Israel-PLO accord. The PLF is also known for a series of spectacular attacks against Israel, including several hang-glider attempts to land in Israeli border settlements).

However, the extent of Iraqi control of the PLF is uncertain. Abu Abbas' man in the PLO Executive Committee, Ali Ishaq, abstained during the voting on the accord.

Arab analysts say that the Iraqi leadership believes that if the ALF and PLF were to quit the PLO then Iraq would be deprived of its indirect influence in the PLO decision-making scene and the hands of Syrian-based dissident groups such as the PFLP and DFLP will be strengthened and, through them, Syria itself.

Iraq and Syria are ruled by rival wings of the mother Baath party set up in the 1960s and have been engaged in a bitter rivalry for domination of the Arab scene for over two decades.

PLO insiders say the Iraqi rejection of the landmark agreement was not exactly a surprise for Mr. Arafat, but the vehemence of the Baghdad media attacks jolted the PLO chairman, who supported Saddam during the Gulf crisis and was ostracised by the oil-rich Gulf Arab states, which cut off financial aid in retaliation.

The resulting financial strain in the PLO was one of the key elements that prompted Mr. Arafat to settle for autonomy rather than immediate statehood, PLO sources say.

U.S. calls on all Arab parties to make peace with Israel

NEW YORK (USIA) — Secretary of State Warren Christopher has urged Syria, Lebanon and Jordan to follow the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and negotiate peace agreements with Israel.

Earlier this month in Washington, Israel and the PLO signed a historic declaration of principles that opens the way for Palestinian "empowerment" in Gaza and the West Bank town of Jericho.

Mr. Christopher met Wednesday in New York with Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, a co-signer of that accord. They discussed the follow-up to the agreement, which anything, a donors conference in Washington to support Middle East peace Friday.

While the agreement marks a breakthrough, equally important, "almost more important," Mr. Christopher said, is the follow-up in the other three tracks of the Arab-Israeli peace negotiations — with Syria, Lebanon and Jordan — as well as "the follow-up with the other countries in the region to encourage them to have comparable steps forward in their relationships with Israel."

Mr. Christopher also met separately with Prince Saud Al Faisal, Saudi Arabia's foreign minister, as he continued a round of bilateral talks on the fringes of the United Nations General Assembly.

The United States stands ready "to serve the parties and will be responsive whenever they are ready to ask us to facilitate the negotiations," Mr. Christopher told reporters at a photo opportunity with Mr. Peres.

"I think we have a period of time while we're adjusting to this new reality," the secretary said. "I'll be ready to go back to the region and serve the parties whenever they are ready to have me do so."

For the time being, he said, "we are encouraging the Syrians

to recognise that the United States is still committed to playing a very strong role."

Mr. Christopher will meet with Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa in Washington next week and said he would "encourage him to continue this process."

The secretary said he hoped at least some of the Arab states would renounce the Arab boycott of Israel at the donors conference.

"It's a time of real volatility and opportunity in the region," Mr. Christopher said. "The United States role here is to press the parties as hard as we can to move to recognise the new reality and take advantage of it while things are so dynamic."

Without predicting anything, he said, "I hope for some good, at least mild, surprises over the next couple of weeks." He did not elaborate, nor would a senior U.S. official who later spoke to reporters at a background briefing.

Mr. Peres also noted that "without an American role and without the secretary of state, the peace process would never be renewed."

Asked if he planned to meet with the foreign ministers of Saudi Arabia, and perhaps Syria, at the Washington conference, Mr. Peres said he had no "inhibitions" about doing so. "I am ready," he said, adding he would "strongly recommend" that the Arabs "come in the open and negotiate peace as it should be negotiated in an age when everything is open and everybody is expecting to have peace as a new reality."

At the background briefing, the senior U.S. official told reporters that Mr. Christopher and Mr. Peres discussed future steps in the Arab-Israeli peace process, focusing on the economic implications of the Israel-PLO agreement and how to implement the declaration of principles.

They also discussed the need

to "undo" some of the past anti-Israeli U.N. resolutions and declarations which have become "anachronistic" in the light of the breakthrough in the peace process, he said, pointing out that Israel is making progress towards normalising its status in the U.N. system.

On the peace process, the official said, "both sides agreed we have two tasks here. One is the task of putting teeth into the declaration of principles by assuring that it will be carried out on the ground." Allocation of the necessary resources is "absolutely necessary to start changing the lives of the Palestinians," he said. The second task is to move ahead on the other tracks of the peace process, especially the Israeli-Syrian and Israeli-Lebanese fronts," he said.

In his talks with the Saudi foreign minister, Mr. Christopher expressed U.S. appreciation for the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) statement that supported the breakthrough on the Israeli-Palestinian front, the official said.

Prince Saud said Saudi Arabia "always recognised that the Palestinian issue is the political focal point of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and that this is a major move forward," the U.S. official told reporters.

He said the United States agrees with that viewpoint and "it is our analysis that the very political core of the Arab-Israeli conflict has been the Palestinian issue. The other core — the geopolitical core — is the Israeli-Syrian dimension, which is basically the strategic dimension."

The conference will establish the coordinating mechanisms and the specific mechanisms for channelling aid to Gaza and Jericho, the official explained. "There will be very strict management controls and mechanisms set up, both at the giving end and hopefully at the receiving end on how to use this."

No peace without Syria and Lebanon — Hariri

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies) — Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri said Thursday there would be no durable peace in the Middle East without the involvement of his own country and Syria.

"The accord reached between Israel and the Palestinians will remain an isolated step unless it is complemented by quick and substantive solutions on the other tracks," he said in a speech to the General Assembly.

Mr. Hariri said Lebanon had a "most painful experience as a result of unilateral deals and partial solutions" and therefore believed peace was indivisible, especially since the issues were interlinked.

"In this context, I should like to emphasise, with the benefit of lessons drawn from our common experience, that there will be no firm or durable peace in the Middle East without Lebanon and Syria."

Both countries are involved in Israel-Arab peace talks which began in Madrid in October 1991 under United States and Russian auspices. But progress has been more rapid on the Palestinian and Jordanian negotiating tracks.

Referring to more than 300,000 Palestinian refugees living in Lebanon, Mr. Hariri said the country was small, had a "delicate population composition" and scant economic resources.

"It cannot provide a solution to the Palestinians who have been uprooted from their land," he said.

"The responsibility for the return of the Palestinians to their homeland, and finding a satisfactory solution to their status, remains within the competence of the international community."

He also demanded the total withdrawal of Israel from all occupied Lebanese territory, in accordance with Security Council resolutions dating back to 1978.

Israel and its allies of the South Lebanon Army militia control a 15-kilometre-deep so-called "security zone" along the Lebanese side of the border.

More than 30,000 Syrian troops are stationed in other parts of the country.

Mr. Hariri also called for the release of more than 200 Lebanese who he said were being held by Israel in the Al Khayma detention camp in southern Lebanon and of another 100 detained in prisons inside Israel.

Lebanon is willing to cooperate fully with the United States and Russia, the co-sponsors of the Middle East talks, "particularly the United States of America, to reach a comprehensive and just solution that would safeguard the rights of all parties to permanent peace, and put an end,



Rafik Hariri

once and for all, to conflicts in the region," Mr. Hariri said.

Between 1968 and 1993 more than 80 U.N. resolutions and statements on Lebanon were issued, but Mr. Hariri singled out Security Council Resolution 425, passed in 1978, as critical. It calls for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the "security zone."

"The only way to insure regional security is by ending the occupation of Lebanese territory," the prime minister said.

He said that "the Lebanese have always been deeply bitter over the fact that political interests have prevailed over justice and the rule of law, resulting in the application of double standards," in implementing U.N. resolutions.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

17:30 Pif El Hercule
17:40 L'Ecole Des Fais
18:30 Beaumaisor
19:00 News in French
19:15 Ushuaia
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 The Pencil Boys
21:00 Varieties
21:30 Perspective
22:00 News in English
22:20 Feature Film: "Glow Dad"

PRAYER TIMES

04:00 Fajr
05:26 Sunrise (Sunrise) Duha
11:25 Dhuhr
14:48 Asr
17:25 Maghrib
18:42 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swatish, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632783
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrasanta Church Tel. 622666

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 715261

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 715261

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 717151

Armenian International Church Tel. 625236

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 624328

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 684195

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 823824, 654932

Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691

Mahmoud Abbas, another PLO executive and architect of the accord, and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres signed the agreement.

The first words of Mr. Aziz when he met Mr. Kaddoumi was to the effect that Baghdad was unable to extend the kind of assistance that he was looking for, said the PLO source.

"Abu Lutf (Kaddoumi's nom de guerre) had to explain that despite his reservations over the agreement he had not abandoned his commitment to the PLO, and remained a soldier in the

Weather will be fine with clouds appearing at low altitudes, and winds will be northwesterly moderate occasionally becoming active. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp. 17/26

Aqaba 20/33

Deserts 14/30

Jordan Valley 19/32

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 27.4, Aqaba 34.5. Humidity readings: Amman 49 per cent, Aqaba 35 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Nidal Al Mubairi 751672

Dr. Hanna Mansour 750197

Dr. Nasser Ibrahim 831039

Dr. Mohammed Al Izzah 752971

First pharmacy 661912

Ferdows pharmacy 783336

Al Asena pharmacy 637055

Nairoukh pharmacy 623672

Al Salam pharmacy 636730

Yacoub pharmacy 644945

Shucinski pharmacy 637660

Najib pharmacy 847632

IBRID:

Dr. Mohammad Al Zu'bi (-)

Al Quds Pharmacy (-)

ZARQA:

Dr. Youcef Awad 988075

Khalifah pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111

Civil Defence Department 661111

Civil Defence Immediate 630341

Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777

Fire Brigade 891228

Blood Bank 775121

Jabal Amman Maternity 843402

Highway Police 896390

Traffic Police 630221

Public Security Department 605000

Hotel Complaints 661176

Price Complaints 661176

Water and Sewerage 897467

Amman Municipality 787111

Complaints 121

Overseas Calls 010230

Central Amman Telephone 623101

Abdali Telephone Repair 661101

Jordan Television 773111

Radio Jordan 774111

Water Authority 680100

Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power 636381

RI Flight Information 08-53200

Queen Alia Int. Airport 08-53300

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

Hussein Medical Centre 81381/32

Khalid Maternity, J. Amn. 64281/6

Akikah Maternity, J. Amn. 64241/2

Jabal Amman Maternity 642362

Malhas, J. Amman 636140



Her Majesty Queen Noor, accompanied by their Highnesses Prince Ra'ed and Princess Majda Thursday take to the streets of Amman to raise funds for the Centre for the Rehabilitation and Training of the Blind (Petra photo)

Queen leads Charity march

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Noor, accompanied by their Highnesses Prince Ra'ed and Princess Majda Thursday patronised the charity march "Al Noor Wal Amal" (the light and the hope) for the benefit of the blind.

The march, which was organised by the Centre for the Rehabilitation and Training of the Blind, took off from the Orthodox Club in Abdoun and ended at the Amman Marriott hotel.

All proceeds from the march will go to the development of the centre, which is the regional office of The Middle East Committee for the Blind in Riyadh.

Established in 1974, the centre is committed to raising public awareness, as well as to catering to the needs of blind women in Jordan and in the region. It currently accommodates 40 women and provides occupational, technical and educational training and assistance.

The centre's ultimate goal is to facilitate the integration of these blind women into society.

One of the centre's primary objectives is to eradicate illiteracy among the blind, especially by teaching them to use Braille, among other advanced methods. It also offers financial and medical assistance, as well as job placement to its students. To encourage blind women from all over the country to benefit from its services, the centre provides accommodation in a hostel.

Queen Noor presented cups to the first three arrivals at the end of the march, in which there were 700 participants.

Receiving the Queen upon arrival at the Orthodox Club were the Minister of Youth, the president of the Center for the Rehabilitation and Training of the Blind, as well as the director of the Orthodox Club.

Prince Mohammad turns 53

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad, the Personal Representative of His Majesty King Hussein, Saturday celebrates his 53rd birthday.

Born on Oct. 2, 1940, Prince Mohammad received his elementary education at the Scientific Islamic College in Amman.

He pursued his academic studies in Switzerland and Britain, and in 1956 joined the Military College in Baghdad for one year.

The Prince acted as Regent on several occasions, and on Nov. 11, 1973 he was appointed Personal Representative of King Hussein.

Prince Mohammad has assumed several posts including the Presidency of the Jordanian Tribal Chiefs Council in 1971 and the Presidency of the Higher Tourism Council in 1972.

He is president of the Jordanian Shooting Federation.



Princess Taghrid in March 1981. He has two sons, Their Royal Highnesses Prince Talal and Prince Ghazi. Prince Mohammad married Her Royal Highness

Ministry to celebrate Arab Child Day with children's carnival in Amman

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Culture announced that a children's carnival will be held in Amman next month to mark Arab Child Day and the start of the Second Jordanian Children's Festival.

Wafa Qusous, director of the ministry's Children's Culture Department, who made the announcement, said the carnival entails a sponsored march which is to start at the Royal Cultural Centre and end at the King Abdullah Gardens where an artistic

celebrations will be held.

Children taking part in the march are from government and private schools, orphanages, the SOS Children's Village, as well as children of employees in Arab and foreign embassies in Amman, she said.

According to Ms. Qusous, decorated cars and musical bands will accompany the marchers together with people dressed in national costumes.

The proceeds of the march will be held on Oct. 8, will benefit the local theatre groups

who will present performances in November.

Seven plays will be presented in November mainly for children, she added.

Ms. Qusous said the ministry will hold a workshop on children's songs on Oct. 25 with the participation of script writers and musicians.

The two-day workshop, to be held at the Royal Cultural Centre, she said, will review working papers dealing with children's songs and music.

First regional seminar on use of pesticides in horticulture to focus on Jordan experience

AMMAN (J.T.) — The first regional seminar on the use of pesticides in horticulture in the Middle East will start in Amman on Monday, according to French embassy statement.

The Ministry of Agriculture, together with the Delegation of the European Communities and the French embassy in Amman joined efforts to bring together representatives of horticulturists of the region who will convene to discuss a vital subject for the economy, the environment and health, said the statement.

Regional producers will exchange views on their field experience in particular, the views of Jordanian fruit-growers' associations.

According to the statement, the Jordanian side is fully aware of the economic and ecological importance of a

more appropriate use of pesticides. But, it said, Jordanian farmers are unaware of the existence of toxic pesticide residues in their productions.

The goal of the 3-day seminar is to allow participating parties to exchange theoretical and practical views on a range of use of pesticides, said the statement.

Among the themes that will be discussed are:

30,000 feared dead in quake

(Continued from page 1)

In Tokyo, The Japanese Foreign Ministry said it was placing at India's disposal the Japan Disaster Relief Team, a highly-trained rescue unit that had already been to earth-

quake zones in Nicaragua, Egypt and Indonesia.

But Japanese government Secretary-General Masayoshi Takemura said India, in these early stages, did not seem to be actively courting aid from abroad.

Jordan sets course for intricate water sharing talks

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Now that Jordan and Israel have signed an agenda outlining principles for a peace agreement, a top Jordanian negotiator is poised to plunge deep into one of the thorniest issues of the complex Middle East conflict — water sharing.

Munther Haddadin, a leading expert on water, says that most of the groundwork has already been done in "informal discussions" with Israel during the 12 rounds of bilateral talks with the Jewish state and during the several meetings of a working group of the multi-lateral phase of the two-year-old peace process.

"All discussions so far were informal since there was no agenda," Dr. Haddadin said. "Now that we have an agenda, we can make real progress in discussing the issues in detail."

The quest for water, a rare commodity in the mostly desert Middle East, is seen as one of the key reasons for the several wars that the region has witnessed in the last 50 years. And it promises to be one of the most complex issues that would need intricate negotiations before an equitable settlement could be achieved.

Speaking in an interview with the Jordan Times, Dr. Haddadin said Jordan was keeping all options open to address the creeping shortage of water and the increasing depletion of underground sources facing all parties involved in the Middle East conflict.

Every water source in the region, from Jordan River and its tributaries to the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in Iraq, as well as the waters of the Red Sea and Mediterranean, has

been mentioned as part of solution to quench the thirst of the region at various points in the last 40 years, but no progress could be made because of the fundamental political divide between Israel and the Arabs, as well as Arab differences.

Dr. Haddadin indicated that one of the centre-pieces of the Jordanian approach to the water problem is an effort to stem the declining level of the Dead Sea, which in turn leads to depletion of aquifers on its shores.

He said the Dead Sea had lost up to 16 metres of its historic level as a result of the diminishing volume of water from the Jordan River, evaporation and industrial use by mineral extracting plants on the Jordanian and Israeli shores.

The declining level, he explained, leads to seepages from the aquifer in the area.

"It is important to keep the Dead Sea at its historic level," he said. "The importance of it is environmental, but (also) the preservation of aquifers on our sides."

"Cracks in the geological formations provide flow channels to the Dead Sea."

The phenomenon is not new, and Jordan had drawn up a project as far back as 1981 to address the problem, said Dr. Haddadin, who served the Jordan Valley Authority (JVA) for 20 years, the last five as its director-general.

"It is purely a Jordanian plan and is not an Israeli plan as some people have suggested," he emphasised. "The JVA conducted the study on its own."

The project involves digging a pipeline-cum-canal from the Red Sea, 280 kilometres to the south, to the Dead Sea to



Munther Haddadin

maintain the level by pumping up to 1.2 billion cubic metres per year — slightly less than what the Jordan River used to dump there decades ago.

The additional advantages of the project, which will benefit all the three riparians of the Dead Sea — Jordan, Israel and the Palestinians — include possibilities of desalination of the Red Sea water, development of the arid, mostly desert region in the south, as well as hydro-electric power generation, Dr. Haddadin said.

He said the project cost, at today's prices, was estimated at \$1.5 billion.

Israel had also drawn up a similar project, but it envisaged linking the Mediterranean Sea to the Dead Sea. The project, estimated to cost \$3 billion, was shelved six years ago because of the high cost. But the Sept. 13 agreement signed between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) includes a clear reference to the project and does not mention the Jordanian project involving the Red Sea.

Dr. Haddadin noted that any project involving water needs the "endorsement of all riparians" — meaning that the Israeli project needs Jordanian and Palestinian approvals and the Jordanian project needs Israeli and Palestinian approvals.

Jordan and Israel signed their agenda for peace talks on Sept. 14, one day after the PLO and the Jewish state signed their accord.

Dr. Haddadin categorically states that there was no forum for Jordanian and Israeli water negotiators except within the framework of the peace process, and the two sides had not held clandestine talks.

"Water negotiations are only in the context of the bilateral and multilateral negotiations," he said.

Dr. Haddadin said Jordan's approach to cooperation with Israel was based on a sequential strategy — "restoration" of Arab rights, "mitigation" of damages suffered during Israel's occupation of Arab territories and "cooperation."

The former chief of the JVA denied that Jordan was seeking the implementation of a 1955 proposal drawn up by U.S. envoy Eric Johnston on water sharing among Jordan, Syria and Israel.

"There is no Johnston agreement," he stated flatly. "The U.S. required compliance with the 1955 proposal (as a condition for) financing any project within the Jordan Valley project. However, the U.S. position is not Jordan's position."

"Jordan is seeking its rightful share of international waters," he said. "It will not introduce any new criteria to water sharing except the internationally accepted (parameters)."

"Any updating of such criteria will not be of our making alone. We will not embark on theories or criteria which have not been accepted by the world community and found their way into bilateral agreements among other riparians elsewhere in the world," he stressed.

He said Jordan was getting 120 million cubic metres of water from the Jordan River and its tributaries compared with the 737 million cubic metres that Israel receives and 170 million cubic metres that Syria gets.

Total annual consumption of water in Jordan today is around 680 million cubic metres.

To make up for the shortfall, Jordan is forced to turn to tapping nine of its 10 subterranean aquifers at a rate which is alarming, Dr. Haddadin said. "We are using a lot more than reason dictates we should. We are posing a danger to our ground water if this current rate of use continues."

Jordan is open to all options, including those involving water from the Euphrates River which is controlled by Turkey, he said, suggesting that Turkey could be given incentives to allow the free flow of the waters down through Syria to Iraq, where they could be trapped and channelled to Jordan.

Regardless of its decades-old grievances of being denied its rightful share, Dr. Haddadin said, Jordan was receptive to all ideas and suggestions as long as it could find goodwill on all sides.

"When you are ready to share, then it is evidence that you care," he said.

"You cannot cooperate with someone if you feel he is going to stab you in the back."

Officials discuss election arrangements

AMMAN (J.T.) — As Oct. 14, the date when candidates for the Nov. 8 parliamentary elections can start their campaigns draws near Interior Minister Salameh Hamad warned that legal action would be taken against anyone violating laws and regulations concerning campaigning.

Speaking after a meeting on Thursday, presided over by the Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali, to discuss arrangements for the elections, Mr. Hamad said the ministry was coordinating matters with the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment and other concerned authorities to assign specific areas in towns and cities where campaigning will be allowed.

The meeting, which was attended by provincial governors at the ministry of interior, discussed arrangements for the distribution of voter cards and assigning voting centres in various governorates, said Mr. Hamad.

He said the meeting also studied the formation of committees, which could number up to 1,500, that would be in charge of supervising the voting procedures.

Mr. Hamad said that committee members would be sworn in prior to their mission.

The prime minister urged



Salameh Hamad

the governors to facilitate the distribution of voter cards in their respective regions and explain to the public the importance of voting in enhancing democracy in the Kingdom.

According to the ministry of interior, 12,069 people have applied to change their voter districts.

The ministry said that nomination of candidates for the coming elections will take place during a three-day period starting Oct. 14, and election campaigns would last until Nov. 7, the day preceding the elections day.

Minister urges increased care for Kingdom's senior citizens

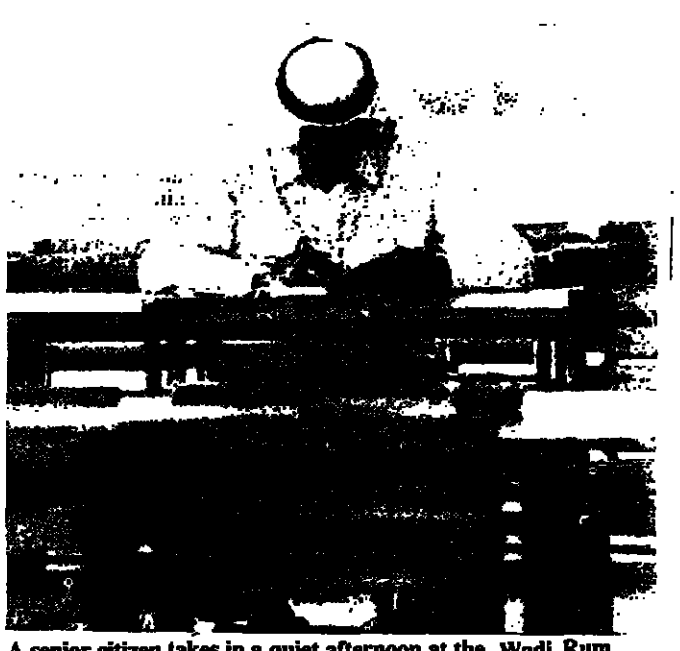
AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Social Development Friday marked International Day for the Elderly by issuing a call to private and public organisations and individuals, to care for the well-being of senior citizens (See related story page 5).

Expressing readiness to support the establishment of homes for the aged, Minister of Social Development Mohammad Al Sgour Thursday said in a statement that the ministry would promptly issue licences for any organisation wishing to open senior-citizen homes and was continuing to cooperate with similar established institutions.

Through agreements concluded with several voluntary and other organisations, the ministry currently provides assistance to 160 senior citizens by supplying food, medicine and financial aid, said the minister.

Dr. Sgour said attention should be focused on helping the elderly to lead a comfortable and dignified life, as they have contributed towards the development and progress of their community.

Pressures of the modern world and rapid population growth have led to a neglect of many of the older members of



A senior citizen takes in a quiet afternoon at the Wadi Rum Resthouse (Staff photo by Aynsley Floyd)

households, said Dr. Sgour, adding that such circumstances increase the need to create special homes to provide required care for senior citizens. He said the Social Security Corporation provides the elderly with a pension while the Civil Status Law makes it imperative that adult children

provide for their aging parents. The Home of Peace in Amman provides free care for 70 elderly handicapped persons, said Dr. Sgour.

Other homes in Jweideh, south of Amman and in Zarqa also care for senior citizens and the homeless, he added.

Gas-powered electricity gets another boost

AL RISHEH (Petra) — The Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA) plans to carry out projects worth JD350 million over the next five years to boost electric power generation utilising gas energy produced at Al Rishah in east Jordan close to the border with Iraq, according to JEA Director General Mohammad Saeed Arafah.

The plans entail expanding the thermal power station in Agaba by the year 1996 and the installation of three new gas-run turbines at the Rishah area early in 1994, said Mr. Arafah in a speech at a ceremony held Thursday at Al Rishah gas fields marking the start of work on a third gas-powered electric unit.

The ceremony was also held to celebrate the expansion of annual gas production from 23 million cubic feet to 50 million. Nearly 98.5 per cent of Jordan's population is served with electric power, 12 per cent of which is generated through the utilisation of natural gas produced at Al Rishah, Mr. Arafah explained.

He said with the installation of the third gas generating unit, 15 per cent of the Kingdom's electric power needs

would be achieved, saving the country the cost of 1.4 million barrels of oil that would have otherwise been used to produce the power each year.

Noting the utilisation of Al Rishah gas started in 1989, Mr. Arafah said electric power has since been fed into the national power grid via a 132 kilovolt line extending for 220 kilometres linking Al Rishah with Al Azraq.

The project, Mr. Arafah said, was implemented in cooperation with Petro Canada which he said, has been helping the Natural Resources Authority (NRA) in Jordan since 1986.

According to Mohammad Abu Ajameh, the NRA acting director, the boost in the gas production would save the country some \$15 million worth of diesel oil annually. He said that Petro Canada has financed the expansion project and also is financing studies towards further exploration of gas reserves at a site 50 kilometres away from Al Rishah fields.

Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Walid Asfour attended the ceremony on behalf of His Majesty King Hussein.

WHAT'S GOING ON

- ★ Exhibition of paintings and old manuscripts at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Painting exhibition by artist Fatah Moudarres at the Baladna Art Gallery.
- ★ Art exhibition entitled "Eastern Dancing — Entertainment in Spare Time" by Stigrid Benemann at Goethe Institute.
- ★ The First International Festival of Fine Arts in Jordan entitled "Colour and Light in the Nabatean Civilisation" at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Jordan.
- ★ Permanent exhibition of 58 artists and "Chair" Exhibition at Darat Al Funn of the Abdul Hamid Shoman Foundation in Jabal Luweibdeh (10 a.m.-7 p.m.; Fridays 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.) Tel. 643251-2
- ★ Film in German entitled "Prisma-Kulturmagazin" at the Goethe-Institute at 8:00 p.m.
- ★ Film in German entitled "Aus den neuen Bundesländern" at the Goethe-Institute at 8:00 p.m.

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GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Editorial and advertising offices:
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Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

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Donors looking all sides

SUCH IS the strength of the international commitment to contribute financially and economically to the reconstruction of the occupied territories that the EC countries appear to be at loggerheads with the U.S. over who should direct and manage the aid package for the Palestinians. On the one hand, Washington seeks to put the World Bank in charge of the huge operation. Brussels, on the other hand, insists on steering the funds that would have been pledged during the conference on reconstruction aid to Palestine that was held yesterday in Washington. The friction between the Western groups eager to spearhead the redevelopment of the liberated Palestinian territories cannot be expected to last long since vying for credit and prestige is not the main concern for the Middle East region as a whole.

True, the West Bank and Gaza Strip need and deserve big money for reconstruction and institution-building after over a quarter of a century of Israeli occupation. Emergency funding is obviously required to build up the infrastructure of a new state soon to take root in the wake of the PLO-Israeli accord. The peace package orchestrated for the Palestinians calls for an aid programme on a scale that has not been witnessed in a long time. The effort is formidable since the objective is to create and establish a state right from scratch and a new order out of chaos.

Still, there is no way that the economic well-being and subsequently the political viability of the newly-born Palestinian entity can be attained in isolation from overall and comprehensive stability and development of the region. The political and economic success of the Palestinians is to a large extent dependent on the economic strength of the surrounding region starting with their immediate Arab neighbours, especially Jordan and Lebanon. Beirut is already seeking a \$10 billion aid package from the international community. Whether the amount requested is proportional to the objectives in mind, the stability and viability of Lebanon remains vital to the success of regional peace on which the Palestinian dimension is dependent.

The same goes for Jordan which is geographically, economically and socially the closest neighbour of the Palestinians. Amman has been and will always be the principal partner of the Palestinians on every conceivable level. These conditions would necessitate a comprehensive aid planning for the Near East in addition to the specific and urgent requirements of the Palestinian state in the making.

Yesterday's meeting of donors would have done well to take the area's overall needs while earmarking emergency and short to long term financial and economic support to the Palestinians. After all, investment in peace in the Middle East would not be complete without addressing the regional dimensions of peace after war.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

BACKED BY the United States, Israel is now trying to cash in on the PLO-Israeli agreement on Palestinian self-rule although no peace has yet materialised and no Israeli withdrawal has taken place from the occupied lands, said Sawt Al Shaab Arabic daily. Israel is now moving speedily to end the Arab countries' boycott of Israel, economically, commercially and culturally, demanding that this is a reward for signing the PLO-Israeli deal on Gaza and Jericho, said the daily. By continually announcing that Jerusalem would continue to remain Israel's united capital, Israeli statesmen are not making it any easier for the implementation of agreements with the Arabs and the Palestinians to arrive at a lasting peace, said the daily. Furthermore, Israel is aiming at this stage to achieve economic ambitions in the Arab region without retreating from its adamant stand concerning the Golan Heights in addition to Jerusalem as it believes that it can reap the benefits of peace without achieving it, continued the paper. By refusing to see an independent Palestinian state established on Palestinian soil, by ignoring the rights of the refugees and by procrastinating the pulling out from the occupied Lebanese and Syrian lands, Israel, said the paper, is clearly playing for time and hoping that the Arabs would fall into the trap of ending the boycott regulations.

NOW THAT the announcement has been made for holding the elections on schedule, the ball is in the court of the political parties said Saleh Al Qallab, a columnist in Al Dustour daily. These parties should now rise to the occasion and prove their ability to shoulder responsibilities and confront the challenge of democracy, demanded the writer.

Jordanian Perspective

By Dr. Musa Keilani

Decision on elections 'turns a new leaf in Jordanian-Palestinian relations'

SURPRISING AS it is, the decision by His Majesty King Hussein to hold general elections as scheduled on Nov. 8, after weeks of speculation in the country, has come as a clear affirmation of three distinct characteristics of Jordanian policy and turns a new leaf in Jordanian-Palestinian relations.

It could be said that external considerations and foreign policy objectives also played a key role in what many politicians here describe as a stunning decision, but a closer look at the elements that guide Jordan's course will indicate that it was internal factors that came into decisive play during a few hours between Monday evening and Tuesday afternoon last week when everybody appeared to have resigned to accepting a delay of the polls until June 15, 1994.

First and foremost, the decision goes a long way in reassuring Jordanian voters of West Bank origin that they are now on an equal footing with East Bankers. In essence, the message is simple and clear: Whether a Nabulsi, Khalili or Jerusalemite or from any other part of the West Bank, they are as equal in rights and responsibilities as a Bani Hassan, Huweitat, Adwan, Bani Sakr or Shaalan in Jordanian decision-making.

Such a reassurance to the "refugees" from 1948, the "displaced" from 1967 and the "returnees" from 1990-92 was much too vital to be brushed aside for any other considerations, given the strong fibre that the West Bankers offer to the Jordanian society.

The fact that Jordan's first multi-party elections will be held in the same format as it was before Aug. 20, the day when the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) secret agreement was let out of the Oslo bag, blocks the way for the so-called Palestinian Likudniks and Israeli hardliners in the West Bank in their pursuit of discrediting the Kingdom. Obviously their objective was to cast serious doubts on Jordan's sincerity towards its citizens of Palestinian origin and create a confusion conducive to undermining the carefully-nurtured Arab-Israeli peace process.

The implications of the Israel-PLO accord and speculation over the fate of Palestinians in the diaspora will definitely be a factor when voters go to the polls on Nov. 8. However, to assume that the polls will definitely produce a rejectionist, hardline parliament which will spoil the peace process by ruling out any agreement with Israel is too short-sighted. Let

us not overlook a distinct factor — that by and large, Jordanians of Palestinian origin have as much stake in ensuring the security and stability of Jordan as anyone else.

It is one thing to express headline views, but it is a totally different story when it comes to realising that one's ballot could also be the paper that could seriously disrupt life in the society where one makes a living and brings up his or her family in a safe and secure environment.

The record of the Jordanian society over the years has left little doubt that an overwhelming majority of the Kingdom's citizens is fully aware of the pitfalls that await them if they turn to headline approaches, given the realities on the ground.

I have no doubts in my mind that the course of Jordan since its inception, and particularly under the reign of King Hussein, has established beyond any doubt among the citizens, whether before the creation of the state of Israel or after, that they are the fortunate among the Arabs of the Levant in recent history.

Examples stare us in the face of how some of our brethren in our neighbourhood were not as lucky as we were and are today to have enjoyed the trappings of a relatively free society where citizens can not only voice their opinion but also be assured that their voices would be heard and listened to instead of being carted off.

Along the same line of thinking, however, it is also naive to expect that concerns for security and stability could totally shut out the so-called hardliners from legislative power. The very nature of democracy dictates that a strong opposition is a *sine qua non* for a constructive society if only because it deprives the executive authority of a free hand to run things according to its whims and fancies.

Equally important in the context of Jordan is the fact that the "opposition" in this country has always been largely "domesticated" and those who shout at the top of their voices, for whatever reason, against peace with Israel have not descended on us from a different planet. They are very much from among us and harbour as much concern as any citizen to prevent chaos from taking over.

It will not be an overstatement to say that the so-called hardliners among us are perhaps the one segment of the Jordanian society which understands better and is fully aware of the "red line" beyond which lies the uncertain that would spare no one among us.



NATO enters minefield in Eastern Europe debate

By Nicholas Doughty
Reuter

BRUSSELS — NATO has stepped into a political and diplomatic minefield as it considers, for the first time since the end of the cold war, whether to take on some of its former enemies in Eastern Europe as members.

Many of those countries are clamouring for shelter from the dangers of an increasingly unstable Europe and the 16-nation alliance knows it must do something to help, if it is not to be written off as irrelevant.

But the dilemma for NATO, as it heads towards a summit in January, is how to improve security to the East while avoiding other risks in taking on more members — risks which could do nearly as much damage to the alliance.

"I don't think anyone is supposing that NATO will be quickly or immediately enlarged so far as full membership is concerned," British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd said recently.

"On the other hand, we certainly don't wish to rebuff their desire to come closer to NATO."

Diplomats say it is most unlikely the summit will offer full membership to any country because most NATO members oppose such a move before the 21st century.

"This is going to be an enormously difficult problem," said a senior NATO diplomat, who asked not to be named.

"We have to ask whether extending membership would weaken the cohesion of NATO as it now is, whether we would

upset Russia and others who would be left out and whether we could end up ensnared in more Yugoslav-style ethnic conflicts."

The crisis in Russia has served as a timely reminder to NATO that the West could face trouble if Mr. Yeltsin loses power and reforms stop. The war in former Yugoslavia shows the kind of vicious ethnic conflicts which might involve NATO if it expands.

There is also the problem of whether countries like Poland and Hungary — the most obvious first choices for NATO membership — should join the alliance before they join the European Community, as the EC has recognised they will.

Until recently, these problems were not even on the agenda.

Ever since the end of East-West confrontation, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation has said it was premature to discuss expanding membership of the 43-year-old club.

Instead, it set up the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC), which brings NATO members, Eastern European nations and former Soviet republics together in diplomatic links.

Although there are plans to use the NACC for more practical activities such as joint peacekeeping, most Eastern European nations say such cooperation has not gone far enough.

One of the major arguments against taking on new members has always been that Russia might object and that such a move would be seen as an

aggressive expansion eastwards by NATO.

But when Russian President Boris Yeltsin said during a visit to Warsaw last month that Poland was free to join the alliance if it wanted, the attitude began to change — before the current power struggle in Moscow erupted.

Germany, concerned for the security of its immediate Eastern European neighbours, has since been pushing for the NATO summit on January 10 to decide on accepting new members.

NATO Secretary-General Manfred Woerner has said it was now time to consider such a move but some alliance members in Brussels criticised him for going too far.

Some NATO members, worried that decisions can be difficult enough to reach with 16 countries, are concerned that it would be even more difficult with more.

But the cat was out of the bag. Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic have again begun to press their case for NATO security guarantees as the best safeguard for their democracies.

The first question for the summit is what to offer the best candidates — countries who have gone furthest in democratic and economic reforms since the collapse of communism.

It is likely that NATO will send a clear signal that membership is open to them, without giving a time frame.

It is also possible, diplomats say, that those countries will be offered a special status which stops short of full membership

but which points clearly in that direction.

One idea would be to allow Poland, Hungary and a few others to accede to NATO's 1949 founding treaty, with the exception of a key article that contains the essential security guarantee.

That article states that an attack on one member state will be treated as an attack on all.

Such a move would still give new members, who would then have the prospect of becoming full members a few years later, the right to consult with NATO if their security is threatened.

Criteria would be established to decide who could come in — including commitments to democracy and human rights, protection for minorities and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

The second issue will be how to make this into a kind of "package deal" that will also include something for other Eastern European nations and former Soviet republics, so they will not feel their level of security has been reduced.

One way of doing that would be a commitment that any new members would not have NATO forces stationed on their soil in peacetime — something that already applies to some existing members such as Norway.

Another suggestion is to offer countries like Russia and Ukraine, which have little real prospect of joining NATO, a separate kind of security treaty that would go further than current diplomatic and military links with the alliance.

The Week in Print

Elections on time: Promoting democracy, maintaining national unity

Reviewed by Elia Nasrallah

THE ANNOUNCEMENT that the coming elections would be held on schedule, reactions to the PLO-Israeli agreement and a host of domestic issues were given prominence in the local press during the past week.

A columnist in Al Rai said that by keeping the Nov. 8 elections date unchanged, the government has maintained the normal political life of the country and avoided any negative impact on the democratisation process.

The decision meant clearly that the government is giving more attention to maintaining national unity and promoting democracy than other considerations, said Mahmoud Rimawi.

He said the decision has been met with nation-wide welcome since it is bound to ensure the continuation of parliamentary life regardless of the developments in the Middle East region.

Under the title of "A Wise Decision" columnist Ahmad Al Miskeh said that the government decision on the elections day has put an end to confusion and rumours.

The decision was in fact a catalyst to speed up the process of democratisation since it would ensure the undisturbed parliamentary rule in the country, said the writer who writes for Al Dustour daily.

The road to full exercise of democracy in Jordan, he said, should never be derailed or diverted by the influence of other political developments.

Hamadeh Faraaneh, a columnist in Al Dustour, said the government decision "pumped new blood in the veins of democracy and opened the door for the resumption of activities by candidates and political groups in preparation for the elections campaign."

The candidates, he added, are now faced with the challenge of convincing an electorate, influenced by domestic and external political developments, of their sincerity to work towards serving national interests.

Now that the elections day has been fixed, it is hoped that the election campaign would focus attention on safeguarding the higher national interests, said Taher Udwan, a columnist in Al Dustour.

The writer said that the absence of a Parliament at a time when crucial events are taking place would have been detrimental to the Kingdom.

It is true that the coming elections would be a purely internal affair for Jordan, but the recent developments and the PLO-Israeli deal are bound to influence the electorate and the candidates alike, said Ahmad Dabbas in Sawt Al Shaab daily.

The writer said that the most crucial thing at the moment is to maintain a strong national unity while the people are allowed to exercise and enhance democracy in the country.

Referring to the PLO-Israeli deal, Mahmoud Rimawi said in Al Rai daily that despite the agreement, peace seems to be still far off and out of reach largely due to Israel's persistence that Jerusalem would remain the capital of Israel.

The writer said that Israel is trying to delay its withdrawal of forces, is holding on to Jerusalem and is ignoring the rights of the 1948 refugees in a manner that shows it is not committed to a just peace.

The Arab parties to the peace negotiations should ensure that the Israelis reach progress and final solutions along all the tracks, simultaneously, if a lasting peace is to be established, he added.

Mohammad Kawash, a columnist in Al Dustour, criticised the Israeli prime minister and the U.S. President Bill Clinton who, he said, are acting to strengthen Israel's economy at this stage and even before any peace agree-

ment has been signed.

The writer said that the United States is backing Israel's attempts to end the Arab boycott of Israeli goods in a manner that would bolster the Jewish state's economic power and make gains in the Arab World without having to sign peace treaties with its countries.

We do not wish to see a peace that would give Israel a greater chance to carry out its objectives and we do not want a peace treaty if it is not comprehensive and just, stressed the writer.

Now that the PLO-Israeli deal has become a fact, the PLO-Jordanian committees discussing future cooperation ought to step up their efforts and raise the level of their discussions to cover economic, social and political areas, said Sawt Al Shaab.

The paper said that Palestinian-Jordanian links are deep and intertwined and they should be safeguarded regardless of the PLO-Israeli agreement on self-rule.

Furthermore, the paper demanded that the committees provide facilities for the 1967 refugees to return to their homeland once they are able to do so under the PLO-Israeli agreement.

"By keeping the Nov. 8 elections' date unchanged, the government has maintained the normal political life of the country and avoided any negative impact on the democratisation process. The decision meant clearly that the government is giving more attention to maintaining national unity and promoting democracy than other considerations."

Salameh Ekour said that any peace agreement which does not ensure the return of the 1948 and 1967 refugees to their homeland is not just. The writer said in Sawt Al Shaab that any refugee who is entitled to return but fails to do so, does not deserve any citizenship in Jordan, in Palestine or in any other Arab country. He said that the refugees ought to return and establish their rights on their national soil and protect Arab national interests.

Mohammad Daoud, a columnist in Al Dustour, focused attention on the persisting shortages of drug supplies in government-run hospitals and health centres.

Some of these centres sometimes are found to have no supplies at all and the patients have to wait for days for their medicines, said the writer.

As long as the Health Ministry is committed to ensure the medicine for those covered by the health insurance scheme, it ought to make arrangements to purchase the drugs even if it has to resort to private pharmacies and drug stores to do so, demanded the writer.

Mohammad Kawash, a columnist in Al Dustour, said that while democracy is being strengthened in Jordan, the rights of women are being denied in many domains.

Women in Jordan have succeeded in ensuring their own independence from men and in assuming posts as doctors, engineers, university professors and in many other fields, but married women are not allowed to travel abroad without a written approval from their husbands, said Kawash. The writer said that the government ought to amend the current legislations and give women more freedom as the world is fast approaching the advent of the 21st century.

Focus on liberalisation

(Continued from page 1)

between East Bank Jordanians and Jordanians of Palestinian origin, including the refugees from the 1967 war, and threaten the social fabric of the country.

Mr. Kabariti cited "solidarity, security and the best interests of the country" as the core concerns of the leadership. "Survival of the state was not in question, but the thriving (of the Kingdom) and how we can fit into the new world order was at stake," he said. In view of the latest political developments, a restructuring of the Jordanian position was necessary, he added. "For the new regional order we need a new Jordanian strategy, a comprehensive order (for the future)."

The secretary-general of the Islamic Action Front (IAF), Ishaq Farhan, said that "the situation was not so complicated as to warrant postponing the elections," and, based on this, his group did "not recommend a postponement."

He feared that a decision to put off the election would "give a free and to the government" to do what it wants without parliamentary control and jeopardise the democratic debate, which depends on a dialogue between the government and the opposition.

The proponents of holding elections on time, who had been represented mainly by intellectuals and writers, saw a postponement as a definite setback to democracy. They argued that the participation of the people in an open debate, regardless of the sensitivity of the issue at stake, was essential and did not see such an exchange as posing any threat to the security of the state. While Dr. Farhan viewed delaying the elections as unfavourable to Jordan's democratic development, Mr. Kabariti did not see a situation where such a step would mean the reversal of the democratisation process. But positions adopted in the debate between the opponents and proponents of holding elections on time largely reflected ideological and party lines on the democratisation in the country as a whole.

Adnan Abu Odeh, Jordan's ambassador to the United Nations and the founder of the now divided Progress and Justice Party, believes that there is no other form of democracy except that of the Western-style representative system. However, he conceded in a recent interview that one needs to advance gradually so as not to step on socio-economic, traditional and cultural landmines along the way.

In the view of Mr. Kabariti, Jordan needs to develop its own model of democracy for it to work. He said that "there are specificities in the Jordanian example that cannot be ignored. We need an arrangement which preserves the balance of power and prevents confrontation. We need an example which unites and does not divide."

Jordan's democracy "is different from all Western democracies because we have a constitutional monarchy and the Monarch is the head of the three branches of government — the executive, the legislative and the judiciary," Mr. Kabariti said. "The King rules through his ministers and legislates through Parliament, and courts' rulings are issued in his name... No Western democracy has this system," he said. "There is no model for democracy that any nation could follow. There is a process which could advance, stagnate or regress. It all depends on the many factors, internal and external, including the economic situation."

Furthermore, Mr. Kabariti does not agree that Jordan's democratisation has unleashed a monster that could not be controlled.

Prominent Jordanian lawyer and former cabinet minister Taher Hikmat agrees with Mr. Kabariti in that Jordan has to develop its own model of democracy. "We cannot copy Western democracy," he told the Jordan Times earlier this week.

Mr. Hikmat said that effort needs to be put into developing a democratic system which incorporates universal democratic values but which is adapted to the particular features of the Jordanian society.

Mr. Hikmat, however, saw the political actors' lack of understanding of social, economic and demographic factors as the largest threat to democracy. Pointing to what he called "the remnants of

the authoritarian regime," he said that it would take time to change the mentality and to educate people in democratic values. "We need time, and we need real representation," he said.

Both Mr. Kabariti and Mr. Hikmat made a link between democracy and economy. "We need enough time and enough economic growth so that the economic bottlenecks do not lead to social problems which might turn into political crisis hindering our democratisation," Mr. Kabariti said.

He called the potential problem a triangle of three Ds — debt, development and democracy — one dependent on the other. His logic is that if there was a debt burden, development was bound to be impeded, and if development was blocked, democracy would be threatened. "Debt hinders proper development," Mr. Kabariti argued. "And without development, you cannot have an open-ended demo-

cracy." On the reversibility of the democratisation process, the IAF's Dr. Farhan said: "I really hope that we have already reached the point of no return." Reversing the democratic choice, he continued, "could lead to a collapse of people's confidence in the state and a damage to the credibility of (Jordanian) governments for decades to come."

Furthermore, Dr. Farhan said, this would tarnish Jordan's political image in the Arab World and the rest of the world. "This is why it is in everybody's interest — the regime, the people and the political parties that this democratisation process does not falter."

Dr. Jamal Sha'er, a founder of Unionist Arab Democratic Party and a former minister takes a different stand from Mr. Kabariti and Dr. Farhan by firmly dismissing that the process can be controlled: "No, the democratisation process is not reversible. The process has grown tough with sharp nails. If anyone tries to scratch it, it will scratch back."

Donors pledge nearly \$2 b

(Continued from page 1)

U.S. Vice-President Al Gore opened the five-hour conference urging businessmen around the world to help out, as well. The theory is that an economically sound Palestinian administration would be inclined to live in peace with Israel and join with it to promote economic well-being throughout the region.

Mr. Gore said: "The presence of so many parties from both inside and outside the Middle East itself sends a strong signal of hope." He also exhorted Arab countries to end the boycott of Israel, which dates back more than 40 years.

Mr. Peres announced the Israeli offer of assistance in his opening statement.

"Israel will work closely with Palestinians and Jordanians to help create a flourishing economic triangle," he said. "We shall do it as neighbours. We do not seek to replace military presence by economic domination."

The biggest single pledge is \$600 million over five years from the 12-nation European Community (EC). The United States originally made a pledge of \$250 million over two years. After some European governments scorned Washington playing host to the conference with a pledge less than half that of the EC, the United States promised \$500 million over five years.

Japan pledged \$200 million over the first two years. Mr. Peres's presence at the meeting itself was unprecedented since long-time Arab foes are attending.

Mr. Peres sat near delegates from Saudi Arabia and wealthy Arab states. Initially, he did not mingle with them but was

later seen deep in conversation with Moroccan and Palestinian delegates.

Forty-three nations sent representatives to the aid conference, also attended by representatives of the PLO, the EC, the United Nations and the World Bank.

Kuwaiti Prime Minister Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah ruled out direct assistance to the PLO's efforts to set up self-rule in the occupied territories.

But he did not exclude some form of Kuwaiti participation in the international programme to develop the territories, the newspaper Al Anbaa reported Friday.

"The government is not willing to support the one who stabbed us and who backed our enemy," Sheikh Saad said in reference to PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, whom Kuwait has accused of siding with Iraq during the Gulf war.

Sheikh Saad was speaking with delegates who, according to the daily, strongly opposed "any assistance to the PLO" and called for coordination among the six-country Gulf Cooperation Council of which Kuwait is a member.

"Any decision must be based on the interests of Kuwait," Sheikh Saad, who is also crown prince, told the delegates.

He said Kuwait could participate in the international effort to set up self-rule in the Gaza Strip and Jericho.

But Kuwait's contribution "will not be similar to the participation of other (GCC) states," Sheikh Saad added. He did not elaborate.

Mr. Christopher met on Thursday representatives of the GCC.

'Jordan needs support'

(Continued from page 1)

for our own talks with Israel. We now look forward to negotiating issues of substance, such as the vital issue of refugees, on the basis of international law.

Jordan, nearest to the core of the conflict, has shouldered an enormous human load. We have given shelter to three waves of displaced Palestinians — in 1948, 1967, and 1991. These refugees — about 1.7 million individuals — account today for one third of Jordan's population. Less than 300,000 are still in camps: 300,000 too many. For Jordan is committed to providing all of its population with the stable and decent environment that goes hand in hand with peace-making and human resource development. Our citizens, whether of Palestinian or Jordanian origin, enjoy civil and human rights equally and participate as equals in our democratisation process. But our human policies have demanded greater sacrifices from our people.

As a consequence of the conflict, Jordan faces a debt overhang of about \$7 billion one of the highest per capita rates in the world. The Gulf crisis cost our national economy \$9 billion, a heavy blow to a country with a GNP (gross national product) half that figure. Yet we continue to enforce U.N. sanctions against Iraq. The exceptional support of the world community is desperately needed if Jordan is to keep shouldering its regional responsibilities and move towards peace, reconstruction and prosperity.

Jordan will do everything in its power to ensure the success of arrangements for Palestinian interim self-government. Indeed, we have already extended our assistance in institution-building and training. Our commitment is not in doubt.

In 1986, we tried to start a development effort to support the people of the occupied territories. The world did not listen to our warning that the economic situation there was politically dangerous. But we do not want to dwell on the past. We want to applaud the fact that today, seven years later, leading members of the world community are gathered to answer our call. Let us now work together to rebuild the occupied territories, and the other parts of the region that have been devastated by conflict.

Although the Palestine question has always been the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict, the entire region has suffered. Peace, then, cannot be piecemeal: It must be comprehensive if it is to endure. The reality of interdependence in all fields requires this. If we are to fashion a commonwealth of

hope on our ancient soil, all must participate. All must have a say in shaping a new regional order, underpinned by trans-national, co-operative, holistic security. And all must be given the chance, and the tools, to play their part in this historic endeavour.

It is our blessing and our burden to live in such extraordinary times. The decisions made today will echo across the world, and down through history. The peoples of the Middle East are depending upon us; generations to come are suspended on our word. Let us be worthy of them; let us give them a chance to taste the fruits of peace. For though we can all walk away from this room, not one of us can walk away from these responsibilities.

say without any ambiguity of interpretation is that it is possible, indeed it is expected, that a tangible breakthrough will be achieved in the Syrian-Israeli negotiations within the coming months, and that it is a mistake for anyone to believe that we need time to pass to digest what has happened between Israel and the Palestinians."

Mr. Mubarak listed three principles which he said the 1979 Egyptian-Israeli treaty had established:

— "Full implementation of the equation of land for peace."

— "Reaching acceptable security arrangements that protect the interests of the two parties and do not infringe the sovereignty of either."

— "That the implementation of the concept of peace in relations between the treaty

Syrian papers see Christopher trip

(Continued from page 1)

parties does not mean forcing either of them to accept circumstances which contradict their interests or the wishes of their peoples."

This was the signal to Israel to ease its pressure on normalisation. Egypt agreed to full normalisation, including trade and embassies, but in practice has kept relations to a minimum, waiting for a wider Middle East settlement.

Shas ready to hand over Golan

The ultra-orthodox religious party Shas, a partner in the government coalition, is ready to hand the Golan Heights back to Syria in exchange for "real" peace, ex-Interior Minister Aryeh Deri announced Friday.

"We would be prepared to give up the Golan in return for a real peace agreement with Syria," party leader Deri told the Maariv newspaper.

"The preservation of life is more important than keeping sovereignty over the (occupied) territories," Mr. Deri said, quoting the spiritual leader of Shas, Rabbi Ovadia Yosef.

The six Shas deputies are part of the government coalition, but Mr. Deri was forced to resign from office three weeks ago over charges that he embezzled \$300,000 of public money.

"Handing back the Golan is in no way a religious problem," he said. "It's a simple question of security."

Shas would not try to block a return of the Golan. Syria made it clear to Israelis that it wants peace, Mr. Deri said.

Prince Hassan meets with Peres

(Continued from page 1)

tion of all Arab land, including East Jerusalem.

"His Royal Highness also stressed the importance of the comprehensiveness of peace through propelling the peace process forward to achieve serious progress on the Jordanian, Syrian and Lebanese tracks."

In another report, Petra said that during the 20-minute meeting, Prince Hassan presented the "consistent Jordanian stand vis-a-vis efforts to achieve a just and comprehensive (Middle East) peace that would be accepted by future generations."

"Such peace should correspond with the higher national interests and political invariance of Jordan based on clarity and away from surprises," Petra said.

It added that the White House meeting was bound to "further boost the peace process into new horizons and deepens the commitment of the concerned parties towards achieving substantive results."

"Jordan's stance on the peace process emanated from its strong relations with the U.S., the major sponsor of the peace process," it said. "Jordan's continued efforts to up-

grade mutual relations would lead the U.S. to carry out its legal, political and moral role towards the implementation of the Madrid formula."

The Crown Prince stressed that "a just peace goes beyond protocols and media floodlights into addressing realities on the ground which includes the rights of refugees based on U.N. resolutions and their long-term plight. Peace should also address the outstanding problems of the region, including development impediments, waters, unemployment and security, and translating international legitimacy into reality."

Israeli media claimed His Majesty King Hussein met with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin last Sunday in the port of Aqaba.

The Royal Palace in Amman and Mr. Rabin himself denied the report.

Following is the text of the statement that Mr. Clinton made to reporters after the Friday's White House meeting: "I have just had the privilege of hosting an historic meeting in the Oval Office between His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan of Jordan and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres of

Israel. This meeting is another step forward on the road toward a comprehensive peace in the Middle East."

"With me in the Oval Office were Shimon Peres, a principal architect of the pathbreaking Israel-Palestinian agreement, and Crown Prince Hassan, a leader who has devoted his life to the promotion of peace and a better future for the whole region. I am grateful to both of them for accepting my invitation to further the cause of peace."

"On Sept. 13, I spoke of a new future for the Middle East and all its peoples and of a turning point in that region's long and troubled history. The meeting which has just taken place, coming as it does two weeks after Jordan and Israel signed their agreement on a common agenda to guide their negotiations, symbolises a new relationship between Jordan and Israel marked by dialogue and acceptance rather than confrontation and rejection."


"The special relationship between the United States and Israel is central to the pursuit of peace, but I also want to emphasise the great importance the United States attaches to Jordan's critical role in achieving a lasting peace."

"In our meeting, both the Crown Prince and Foreign Minister (Peres) spoke of their hopes for a future of peace and prosperity for Israelis, Palestinians, Syrians, Lebanese and Jordanians alike — indeed, for the whole region."


"To help work towards this goal of a real and enduring peace, they discussed ways to give impetus to their bilateral negotiations with a view to resolving all outstanding issues that will affect the lives of their people, with special emphasis on economic issues, including trade, finance, agriculture, economic development and movement of peoples and ideas."

"They also spoke their commitment to close coordination with the Palestinians as the peace process goes forward."


"In this way, Jordan, Israel and the United States can act as partners with the Palestinians as we seek to advance our common goal of a comprehensive peace in the Middle East. I look forward to working with the Crown Prince and Foreign Minister (Peres) in the future as we build the foundations of prosperity and hope between Israelis, Palestinians and Jordanians and as we seek to spread the benefits of peace to all the people of the Middle East."



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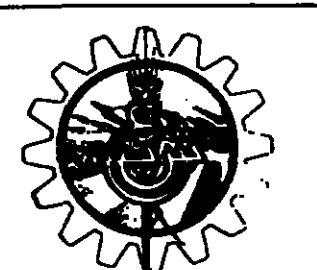


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 and prosperity.

Israel stock hopes rise on peace moves

TEL AVIV (R) — Swift and surprising Middle East peace moves have bolstered Israeli hopes of greater foreign investment and unprecedented gains on the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange (TASE).

Stocks have soared since Israel signed a breakthrough accord last month with the PLO and announced a peace agenda with Jordan.

"Just look at the performance before the accord. The market was going absolutely nowhere," said Mark Meiras, managing director of Israel's Pacific Mediterranean Investments.

He said without the accords, investors would have backed off because of inflation and unemployment, poor second-quarter earnings and an official forecast for 1993 gross domestic product growth that fell from 4.8 per cent to 4.3 and then to 4.0.

"But now with the peace dividend, it's a factor that enables them to invest," Mr. Meiras told Reuters.

Last month the exchange's Mishanim blue chip share index has risen more than 20 points to around 230.

Mr. Meiras said if earnings continued to grow, Middle East peacekeeping thrived and the economy picked up, the index could more than double to 500 by mid-1995.

All this is tempered by warnings.

Analysts doubt Israel will be a gold mine soon — despite the breakthrough with the PLO. For foreign investors, the Middle East remains a risky region.

"It'll take years to undo that image," Arie Caspi, an economic commentator, wrote in the Jerusalem Report magazine. "Right now, out of the 1,000 biggest companies in the world, only five have significant investments in Israel," he wrote.

Bank of Israel governor Jacob Frenkel reminded investors in a radio interview last month that stock markets tend to reflect expectations and these could be over-optimistic.

Mr. Meiras said it would take another five years before the region could prove to be truly investment-worthy. By then the Israeli-PLO deal would have had time to prove itself and other Arab states may have made peace with Israel.

In any event, analysts said it was hard to imagine Arab stock markets competing with the Tel Aviv exchange. The exchange is automated, and perhaps the most developed in the region with the exception of Turkey's.

Neighbouring Jordan's exchange is small by comparison and a Palestinian market is at least five years off, they said.

The Israeli exchange has 503 companies offering more than

1,000 securities. Of the 503, 138 have been added to the exchange since the start of the year.

The Tel Aviv exchange also has ever-increasing liquidity. About 100 million of stock is bought and sold daily on the Tel Aviv exchange compared to 20 million two-and-a-half years ago.

Regulations for foreign investors may also be the most relaxed of any Middle East country. Most restrictions were lifted last year.

Most analysts believe it is too early to predict which firms will benefit most from peace moves. But tourism, infrastructure and communications companies are the likeliest short-term candidates.

A promised sell-off of such government firms as the national airline El Al and the country's banks has also buoyed investors' hopes.

Among Mr. Meiras's picks: — Bezeq Phone Company: "If there's more trade, there's more phone calls."

— Israel Electric Company: "Once they go public they'll be helping Palestinians set up their electric infrastructure."

— Dan Hotels and Africa-Israel Investments, which has a big hotel subsidiary, and even the four rental car firms which are traded on the exchange.

"People who want to visit Jordan will come to Israel first and then drive east in a rent-a-car."

Wide gaps remain between perceptions of World Bank, Palestinians on economic needs

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Wide gaps remain between the perceptions of the World Bank and Palestinian planners in assessing the economic needs of the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip during the interim five-year period of Palestinian autonomy and beyond, negotiators and analysts say.

An upgraded version of the World Bank estimates is on the table at a donors conference being held in Washington, but a major part of the disparities between the assessments by the bank and the Palestinians remains unaddressed. It raises the prospect of the donors coming up with pledges falling short of what the Palestinians deem as the minimum level of the needs of the occupied territories.

A study conducted by the World Bank under a mandate from the working group on regional economic cooperation, stemming from the multilateral phase of the Middle East peace process, estimated the needs at \$3 billion spread equally over 10 years.

But the Palestinians came up with their own programme, entitled the Palestinian Development Plan, which estimated the needs at \$11.7 billion spread over seven years.

The two reports were studied on the fringes of the annual meetings of the World Bank and the International

Monetary Fund (IMF) in the third week of September.

Dr. Yousef Sayegh, head of the Palestinian team to the working group on economic cooperation, presented a 30-page Palestinian paper to the meeting, sparking a debate on the accuracy of the two assessments, and produced what could be described as a compromise.

But the catch, analysts say, is that the World Bank upgraded its assessment from \$300 million to between \$500 million and \$550 million per year without committing itself to any timeframe.

It appeared Thursday that the bank had downgraded the revised figures to between \$400 million and \$475 million a year.

Ram K. Chopra, the World Bank's director for the Middle East, admitted that the bank's initial estimates did not take into account the need to finance a civil administration and the prospect of a higher number of Palestinians who need infrastructure services.

He did not mention the \$500 million to \$550 million cited by Palestinians.

According to Samir Abdullah, a senior Palestinian economic planner who is attending the donors' conference in Washington, that is only part of the story.

Dr. Abdullah, professor of economics at Al Najah

University in the West Bank, said there were three distinct areas of differences between the Palestinian Development Plan and the World Bank assessment.

These, he told the Jordan Times on Wednesday, were:

— The World Bank did not take into consideration the possibility of "hundreds of thousands of Palestinians" returning to their homes subject to Israel-PLO negotiations, as provided for in the Sept. 13 autonomy agreement signed in Washington.

"The investment programme in infrastructure is too conservative" when this factor is taken in account, Dr. Abdullah said. He did not reveal what parameters the Palestinian plan considered to determine the number of Palestinians expected to return home.

Senior PLO officials have said that they would seek the repatriation of 875,000 Palestinians whom they describe as "displaced" by the 1967 war. The bulk of them live in Jordan and Syria.

— The World Bank report did not make any provision for housing for the Palestinians, leaving it "as an exclusive private sector responsibility."

"We believe that the public sector should play a major role in housing in the initial stages," Dr. Abdullah said. The Palestinian Development Plan calls for \$5.8 billion for housing in the occupied territories.

One of the main objectives of providing housing for the

Palestinians — "turning the Balata refugee camp into the town of Balata for instance," as an analyst put it — is highly political in that a move from the squalid living conditions of refugee camps to proper houses will go a long way in turning many middle-of-the-road Palestinians into supporters of the Israel-PLO accord.

"The course of the autonomy accord will be determined largely in the refugee camps of the Gaza Strip and West Bank," noted a Western diplomat familiar with the Palestinian plan. "It is very important for the proponents of the agreement not only to enlist the support of those who live in camps but also to do it fast."

— The third point of difference between the Palestinian plan and the World Bank report is that the bank did not allow for the costs involved in repairing the port of Gaza and building an airport and road networks in the occupied territories, Dr. Abdullah said.

He did not give details of the Palestinian plans, but PLO officials have said that initial projects include the upgrading of an airstrip in Jericho at a still unspecified cost, in addition to repairing the ancient Gaza seaport on the Mediterranean and building new roads.

Except for major highways linking key towns in the West Bank and those in and around Jerusalem, other areas in the occupied territories have only dilapidated ac-

cess roads or have no roads at all.

A fourth point, or observation, raised by the Palestinians was the "neutral" language that the World Bank used in its report and its exclusion of any reference to the systematic damage that the occupation power has inflicted on the Palestinian economy, Dr. Abdullah said.

The professor did not outline the implications of the "neutral" language or the omission of the economic effect of the occupation. But other experts in international law said inclusion of the points in the report would have evolved into a direct Israeli responsibility to remedy the situation.

Ironically, Israel is expected to make a multi-million contribution to the Palestinian development plan.

Under the Palestinian Development Plan, the occupied territories need an infusion of around \$1.5 billion every year, Dr. Abdullah said.

He expected this target to be met through several sources: The \$500 million to \$550 million accepted by the World Bank, \$300 million in direct and indirect taxes from the occupied territories, \$400 million to \$500 million in investments from the Palestinian private sector, including those in the diaspora, and \$100 million pledged by the EC Executive Commission over and above expected contributions by EC member countries to the World Bank fund.

U.S. poised for strong upswing, Bentsen says

WASHINGTON (R) — Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen has declared that the U.S. economy was poised for a "strong upswing" and called on America's allies to do their part to boost sluggish global growth.

In his most optimistic comments since taking office in January, Mr. Bentsen said low interest rates and inflation in the United States would lay a foundation for faster growth.

"Inflation and interest rates in the United States are now at their lowest level in two decades," Mr. Bentsen said. "The economy is preparing for a strong upswing."

"There are increasing signs that business investment is growing and that production will rise," he added.

His comments came a few hours after the government reported the U.S. economy grew at a modest 1.9 per cent rate in the second quarter after a meagre 0.8 per cent rise in the first quarter.

With the United States poised to pick up the pace of its weak recovery, Mr. Bentsen turned to rich allies to take more action to get their recession-hit economies back on track.

"We face the opportunity for a period of truly global

peace and prosperity," Mr. Bentsen told the annual meeting of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank. "But... (that) will require a concerted and concentrated effort from all of us," he pointed out.

Mr. Bentsen lectured his fellow finance ministers that it was time to back up words with action, rather than repeat a mantra — "recovery is just around the corner" — in the hopes that it will come true.

After three years, this line is beginning to wear a little thin," he said. "Growth cannot

be achieved by pronouncement — only by good policies."

He patted Washington on the back, noting that President Bill Clinton's budget will cut \$500 billion from the deficit and free up savings for private investment the world over.

But saying that unemployment was still rising in the industrial world, he called on rich allies to move further down the path of growth.

He said the foundation was being laid for further interest rate cuts in Europe, confidently asserting that "inflation has been tamed."

Ford to axe more than 1,000 jobs in Britain

LONDON (AFP) — The Ford Motor Group is to axe between 1,000 and 1,400 jobs at its British plants before the end of the year, the group told the trade unions. The automaker, the largest in Britain, said it wished to improve productivity at its plants and adapt to the drop in demand in western Europe. Ford said the loss of jobs would be made good thanks to voluntary departures, adding that there would be no sackings. Up to 1,200 jobs, many of them temporary, will be axed at production sites, including some 450 at Dagenham, in south-eastern England. Administration would be asked to shed 200 jobs. The group said it had progressively cut the number of employees from a total 72,000 in 1980 to 31,350 now, while increasing production. Thanks to these gains in productivity, the group had reduced its losses before tax in 1992 to \$533 million (\$530 million), compared to \$587 million in 1991. Ford U.K. sold 99,050 new cars in Britain in August.

Needy nations growing but donors short of cash

WASHINGTON (R) — Economic policy-makers from around the world lined up at the IMF/World Bank meeting this week hoping for an aid handout but the rich countries made clear that precious little was available.

Nations freed from the communist grip in eastern Europe and South East Asia and those hoping to prosper from peace in the Middle East joined Latin American and African countries asking for economic aid.

The end to the cold war created the promise of prosperity but a hoped-for peace dividend has turned out to be a cruel mirage in four years.

The collapse of the Soviet Union has brought its own regional conflicts. Mounting unemployment, costly budget deficits and anaemic growth — in part because of defence cutbacks — have made more aid for developing nations economically and politically unbearable for industrial countries.

"Now all of a sudden, some of the countries that have al-

ways been a strong supporter of aid — Canada, the Nordic countries — are scaling back," said John Williamson, a senior fellow with the Institute for International Economics.

"The United States and the U.K. have been doing this for some years," he said.

To be sure, some regions and nations have benefited more than others. The importance of countries in the former Soviet Union and fears of a wave of refugees if those economies run aground have spurred promises of assistance.

On Thursday, for instance, the United States, extended repayment terms on \$1.1 billion of Russian debt, giving Moscow room to get more credits to buy grain.

The prospect of peace in the Middle East now that an Israeli-Palestinian peace accord has been signed has spurred the West to offer aid to a new Palestinian homeland.

Secretary of State Warren Christopher said donor countries will probably contribute more than \$2 billion over a period of five years to help

Palestinians

Vietnam and Cambodia were also the recipients of the largesse, winning fresh funds to pay overdue debts to the International Monetary Fund, clearing the way for more aid.

The relief for areas creating capitalist markets stood in contrast with the thin support for other nations which have long been battling poverty in Africa.

"The fact that the fund and the World Bank have expanded their geographic reach most not cause them to lose interest in the developing countries, in particular the very poorest nations such as those of sub-Saharan Africa," French Finance Minister Edmond Alphandery told delegates.

"IMF Managing Director Michel Camdessus called Africa the 'sinking continent' and said the poorest areas were virtually cut off from the world economy. To address the growing issue of starvation, the World Bank said it would hold a conference in Washington later this year.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SATURDAY OCTOBER 2, 1993/93

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Influential persons from afar will be willing to listen to your ambitions and to give their assistance that will be both enlightening and helpful to your special sphere of endeavour.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) A new attitude early towards outside associates can be helpful to you in a successful relationship but avoid arguments with officials later.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Think about the various means by which to have more harmony at your usual occupation but keep from an argumentative newcomer later.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Early morning constructive activity is soon broken by some unusual and bizarre changes that take place and you need to be on the alert for them.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Get important matters quickly handled at home early and then be off and away so you will get into some unfortunate events there.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Errands or shopping especially for fine articles of artistic interest should be done early as later you find conditions take a turn for annoyances.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Find out what needs to be done of a financial nature and do so quickly as you soon find unex-

pected events and delays could otherwise arise in your path.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You can get pretty much what you want shortly after breakfast but then you find some surprising arise to keep you from gaining your ends.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Think about what you can do to get out from under a restriction early or it can take a new twist that can make it difficult for you to do later.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) If you have decided upon a course of action to pursue to gain an anticipated wish go after it early as later you find other matters void your efforts.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 19) You need to make sure that you do nothing in public today or tonight that could react against the good will and standing you have so carefully built up.

AQUARIUS: (January 20 to February 19) Quickly put into motion any new plan that appeals to you and then sit down and watch how revisions are made that you have to go along with.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Get rid of whatever obligations are facing you early and then you will be able to do what you want the rest of the day when unusual matters arise.

THE BETTER HALF By Glasbergen



"To apologize for my behavior last night, I brought you a bouquet of excuses."

Peanuts



Andy Capp

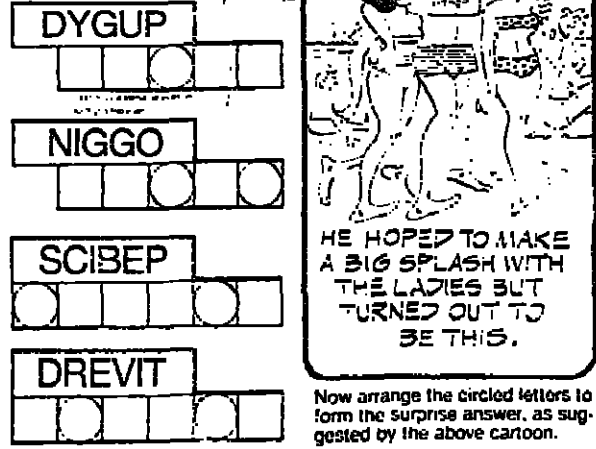


Mutt'n'Jeff



JUMBLE THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

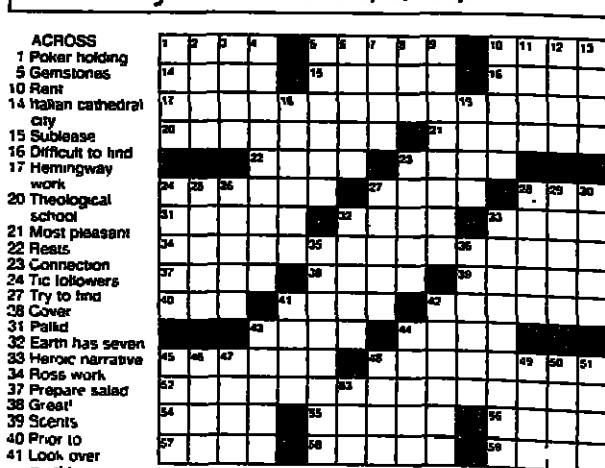


Print answer here: A

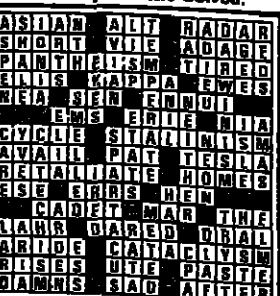
Saturday's Jumbles: ASSAY NUDE RATHER THROAT

Answer: Always cheered when they're down and out — ASTRONAUTS

THE Daily Crossword by Joel Davajan



Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:



46 Mrs. Nick, 47 Lush, 48 A — able, 49 Concerning, 50 Experts, 51 Lush, 52 Letters that concern MADD.

Russian political crisis blurs outlook for dollar

This report is submitted by Naser Nabulsi, private client group, Merrill Lynch-Dubai

Overview

Fundamental view: The dollar weakened against most of the major currencies in recent trading on expectations that Boris Yeltsin is likely to prevail in his confrontation with Russia's parliament. The dollar's safe haven status could come into play again in the days ahead if the political crisis takes a turn for the worse.

On a fundamental basis, we continue to expect the dollar to rise against the European currencies. Longer-term business cycle and interest rate trends continue to favour the dollar, and we look for it to rise 10 per cent or more against the Deutschmark to the 1.85 level in the next 12 months.

Talk by Japan's policymakers of a new fiscal package that could include a 10 trillion yen tax cut should keep the yen firm against the dollar in the months ahead. In addition, prospects for a weak recovery will do little to curb the nation's huge current account surplus, putting additional upward pressure on the yen. We expect the yen to trade in a range of 90-110 against the dollar and think a move to the 95 level is likely in the next 12 months.

Technical view: The U.S. dollar index rose 1.4 per cent for the week ended Sept. 24. This was the largest weekly gain in more than two months and represents the fact that the dollar was strong against five

of the six major currencies that we regularly monitor. The exception was the Australian dollar which managed to rally a bit less than 0.3 per cent versus the greenback. Despite this recent strength, medium term momentum oscillators continue to have a downward bias.

This suggests that the dollar's post-July corrective pattern is still unfolding and that any nearby strength is likely only counter trend and will be short lived with the index recently having marginally broken the 91.00-93.00 support band, the technical evidence would suggest that it is likely to fully test the May lows (just above 88.00) after the current firmness runs its course. However, the counter trend rally still has the potential to a test of resistance at 92.00-93.00; second resistance exists above 94.00.

Deutschmark

Fundamental view: The dollar weakened against the DM to the 1.61 level on expectations that Boris Yeltsin will prevail in his confrontation with Russia's parliament. The dollar's safe haven status could come into play again in the days ahead if the political crisis takes a turn for the worse. But longer-term economic and interest rate trends continue to favour a stronger dollar against European currencies. We expect the Bundesbank to continue easing monetary policy

this November and to bring short-term interest rates down 200 basis points or more over the next twelve months in response to Germany's recession.

We view recent hopes that the German economy is on the road to recovery as premature, especially against a backdrop of faltering income growth and an overvalued currency. We also expect the U.S. to grow at a 3.5 per cent rate in the second half of this year, which should contrast favourably with Germany's weak economy. We maintain our six- and 12-month forecasts for the DM/U.S.\$ rate of DM 1.80 and DM 1.85 respectively.

Technical view: The Deutschmark fell almost 1.6 per cent versus the U.S. dollar last week. However, put/call ratios are neutral to overbought, and medium term sentiment surveys are overbought. The negative sentiment picture is bolstered by short term momentum, which was recently at its most overbought level since last September, and has now reversed to the downside. This tends to support the current weakness, but the fact that short term oscillators did confirm the recent highs and that medium term momentum has a firm upward bias, implies that higher currency highs are still indicated — any remaining short term weakness notwithstanding.

In addition, the recent rally through 1.62 DM/U.S.\$ (to near 1.58) implies that a test of the twin peaks recorded last April and December in the

1.55-1.57 range is increasingly likely. The reversal in recent days carried the currency back to the 1.64 breakout point; that area should provide important first support, with second support likely near 1.667. The mark/yen cross-rate has held well above the 62-64 trading range — moving to the 66 area. While medium term momentum is constructive, short term oscillators have been weak in recent days. This allows for a test of the trading range breakout point which appears to be fairly strong. Significant chart resistance remains at 70.

Pound sterling

Fundamental view: The pound held steady against the dollar in recent trading near the U.S.\$: 1.51 level. We maintain our long-held view that the fundamentals point to a weaker pound versus the dollar. With short rates in the U.S. expected to remain at current levels in the near term, interest rate differentials should move in the dollar's favour as U.K. interest rates decline further along other European interest rates. The pound has weakened against the DM in recent trading amid a deteriorating political situation in Britain. However, we expect the pound to continue to appreciate against the DM in the year ahead.

Weak economic conditions and expectations of sharp interest rate cuts in Germany are fundamental forces pushing the pound higher against the DM. We expect no growth in

Germany next year, but look for real GDP growth and the U.K. to accelerate 3.2 per cent from 2 per cent this year. Based on expectations for lower German interest rates and a growth differential that favours the U.K., we expect the pound to move toward the DM/12.60 level in the next 12 months. But based on our 12-month target rate of DM/U.S.\$ 1.85, the pound should weaken further against the dollar to the \$1.41 level.

Technical view: The British pound fell 1.4 per cent against the U.S. dollar last week. Although short term sentiment is currently viewed as a negative, more medium term indicators have not yet reached excessive levels. Moreover, the recent breakout above a long standing trading range at 1.47-1.52 U.S.\$/BP (which is now viewed as support) has potentially improved the currency's medium to longer term prospects.

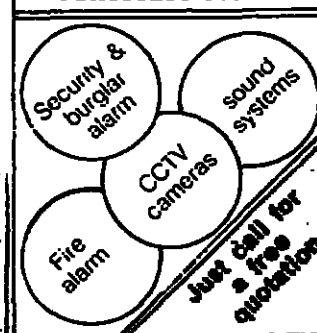
For now, the rally high above \$1.55 was confirmed by both short and medium term momentum, implying that this area of resistance will be broken in coming weeks and will pave the way for a challenge of important long term resistance at \$1.58-\$1.60. If this \$0.05 band is decisively penetrated, a case can be made that an important base will then be in place. It is reasonable to suggest, therefore, that \$1.60 is as important to the currency as resistance at \$1.40 is as support. Little has changed versus the DM. The cross-rate has been

weak (thereby representing relative sterling strength) since late July, moving from its high just below 2.59 to a recent low near important support at 2.45. Short term momentum has not confirmed these lows, and still allows for the possibility of a rally back to perhaps 2.52-2.54. However, medium term momentum remains weak, and any such rally will likely be short lived. Lower lows, therefore, are still expected over the medium term.

Japanese yen

Fundamental view: The yen firmed to the 105 level against the dollar in recent trading amid talk by Japan's policymakers of a new fiscal package that could include a 10 trillion yen tax cut. Expectations of another fiscal stimulus plan should help keep the yen firm against the dollar in the near term.

PETRA ELECTRONICS
Tel: 656206-613681



AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET				
DAILY REPORT				
COMPANY'S NAME				
TRADING VOLUME	PRICE	OPENING	CLOSING	PRICE
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK				
100,000	1.1500	1.1500	1.1500	1.1500
CALICO AMMAN BANK				
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JORDAN INVESTMENT BANK				
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NATO may cut East Europe plans after Yeltsin warning

BRUSSELS (R) — NATO may be forced to scale back plans to admit some former Communist enemies as members after President Boris Yeltsin, fighting to keep control of Russia, warned the West not to push the alliance eastwards.

Mr. Yeltsin's dramatic appeal, which appeared to reverse earlier statements that it was up to countries such as Poland to decide whether to join NATO, came in a letter to Western governments this week, diplomats said.

Instead of expanding NATO, one of the key issues for an alliance summit in January, Mr. Yeltsin said Russia and the 16-nation North Atlantic Treaty Organisation should guarantee security in Eastern Europe together.

Countries such as Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic are eager for NATO membership to protect them in an increasingly unstable Europe. Their hopes have risen recently and diplomats said they would be dismayed by Mr. Yeltsin's proposals.

"I think a cloud of gloom will settle over NATO on the enlargement issue and you can imagine what the Eastern Europeans will think about Russia guaranteeing their security, so soon after they got out from Moscow's shadow," said one diplomat.

The letter — sent to the United States, Britain, France and Germany — seemed aimed at reassuring the Russian military, whose support Mr. Yeltsin needs in his struggle with a conservative parliament.

A NATO spokesman declined all comment but other alliance sources said Mr. Yeltsin had written that if the alliance took on Eastern Euro-

pean members, it would provoke an adverse reaction from the public and from others in Russia.

But, if the reasons for the letter were clear, the sources said the proposals themselves were puzzling.

Mr. Yeltsin said the international agreement that paved the way for German unification in 1990 legally ruled out further expansion of NATO, although that agreement contains no explicit reference to the issue.

"I know why he's saying all of this but I don't see the point of his proposals," said one alliance source.

"They'll upset the Eastern Europeans and I can't see NATO joining with Russia to give security guarantees."

Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev said in a magazine interview published Thursday that NATO should expand its links with its country's armed forces.

"That would be much more important for the security of Europe than a hasty expansion of NATO to include Poland or Hungary," he said.

"Russia must not be isolated. The goal must be to integrate Russia into the international community."

But Mr. Yeltsin's proposals are likely to have a major influence on the debate within NATO on how far to open up for new members. Diplomats said the alliance would have to proceed more cautiously now than some member nations such as Germany want.

Ironically, Mr. Yeltsin himself put the issue on the agenda when he said last month on a visit to Warsaw that it was entirely up to Poland to decide whether it wanted to join NATO.

The remarks sparked a debate in NATO about whether it should now accept Moscow's former satellites, because the alliance presumed that Russia no longer had a problem with it.

Since the end of the cold war, NATO has refused to consider extending its security guarantees to others and has instead set up a "cooperation council" which provides diplomatic links with its former Warsaw Pact enemies.

Now, NATO faces a major predicament.

It has always said it wanted to expand links with Russia and involve it fully in security issues but that Moscow should not have an effective veto on who joins.

Germany confirmed Friday President Yeltsin had written to NATO about its planned Eastward expansion, but said Bonn saw it as an offer of cooperation rather than a rebuff to efforts to extend the bloc.

Chancellor Helmut Kohl's spokesman played down statements by diplomats in other NATO capitals who said Mr. Yeltsin's letter to Western leaders was a warning.

"The letter is there, but I do not believe it is explosive," spokesman Norbert Schaefer told Reuters.

"It is not a rebuff, it is an offer of cooperation," he added of the letter delivered this week to the United States, Britain, France and Germany.

Mr. Kohl and Defence Minister Volker Ruehe have pressed for NATO to take in former Warsaw Pact enemies, a drive that gained momentum after Mr. Yeltsin in Warsaw last month said Poland was free to join the Western alliance.

Mr. Schaefer said the letter was being reviewed by Bonn's Foreign and Defence Ministries as part of preparations for the January summit.

The leader of Poland's former Communists, who won most votes in last week's elections, accused Russia Friday of sending confusing signals over NATO membership for East European nations.

Aleksander Kwasniewski, head of the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD), said President Yeltsin had apparently changed his mind after earlier deciding to present no obstacles to Poland's possible membership in the alliance.

"I am annoyed by this," Mr. Kwasniewski said in a radio interview. "There is nothing worse in politics than lack of consistency."

Russia's Defence Minister has told Hungary it would be unfortunate if former Warsaw Pact states joined NATO soon because this would isolate Moscow, Hungary's official MTI news agency reported Friday.

In a dispatch from Moscow, it quoted Hungarian Defence Minister Lajos Fur as saying Russian Defence Minister Pavel Grachev had told him this during talks Thursday.

"It would be unfortunate if the former Warsaw Pact states joined NATO in the near future because this step would relegate Russia to a much more isolated situation," Mr. Grachev told Mr. Fur in Moscow, the agency said.

"The Hungarian Minister quoted Mr. Grachev as saying that in the long term, if NATO is expanded and Russia also joins it, his country would not oppose the admission of the East Central European states," it added.

Abkhazians fight pockets of Georgian resistance

MOSCOW (AFP) — Separatist rebels battled government forces in the mountains of eastern Abkhazia Friday, cleaning up the last pockets of Georgian resistance in the breakaway region, ITAR-TASS reported.

The Abkhazian forces, who gained control Thursday of the last two Georgian-held towns in the region, Ochamchire and Gali, advanced Friday towards the Inguri River, which forms the border between Abkhazia and western Georgia, military leaders of the separatist forces told the Russian news agency.

The Georgian News Agency Iprinda reported that government units were surrounded in the mountains near the regional capital Sukhumi, which fell to separatists Monday, and outside Ochamchire and that close-quarters fighting Friday was intense.

Iprinda quoted hospital sources as saying 744 wounded Georgian soldiers had been admitted for treatment in recent days and more were expected.

This week's string of battlefield victories have left the separatists in control of more than 80 per cent of Abkhazia, which before the war had a population of 80,000 ethnic Abkhazians and 250,000 Georgians.

Dzhaba Iosseliani, a close aide to Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze, said Georgia had to consider the



Two Georgian soldiers carry their guns as they participate in a rally in which hundreds of people demanded the resignation of Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze and his replacement by former Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia (AFP photo)

region as definitively lost since it could not take on Russia which he said had masterminded the separatists' campaign.

"We will not recover Abkhazia, whose occupation had been planned by Russia," said the head of the Georgian Armed Forces. He added that Georgia "does not have the means to fight Russia."

The separatist authorities, led by Vidislav Ardzinba, said Friday they had begun to restore transportation in Sukhumi and that business activity was picking up.

The government of Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze was meanwhile struggling with an influx of refugees fleeing Abkhazia.

Kim: Pyongyang remains a threat

SEOUL (Agencies) — South Korean President Kim Young-Sam said Friday that Seoul must keep its guard up because North Korea — especially in nuclear weapons — continues to build its military strength.

In spite of severe food shortages, North Korea is further building up its military muscle and has recently added again to the concentration of troops and arms along their side of the demilitarized zone," Mr. Kim said in his address on the 45th Armed Forces Day.

"North Korea has a strong obsession with developing nuclear weapons. We ask the

North this question: At whom are the nuclear bombs and missiles aimed," he said.

"We ourselves must protect our own national security. We need strength to maintain peace and preserve our national integrity."

Tension continues to exist between the two Koreas because South Korea and Western allies suspect the North of conducting a secret nuclear arms programme at a complex at Yongbyon, 100 kilometres north of the capital Pyongyang. The site is believed to be a nuclear waste store for weapons-grade uranium.

"Despite the fact that the rest of the world is headed toward reconciliation and peace, the Korean peninsula still remains the only remnant of the cold war," Mr. Kim told the nation in a television speech.

The two Koreas remain technically at war since the 1950-53 Korean war.

South Korea opposes immediate international sanctions against North Korea over its nuclear weapons programme despite mounting calls to do so, Seoul's foreign minister was quoted as saying Friday.

Yeltsin trip to Japan is shortened

TOKYO (AFP) — The Japanese government officially announced Friday that Russian President Boris Yeltsin would make his first visit to Japan, but disclosed that the stay would be less than 48 hours. At Russian request.

And Foreign Minister Tsutomu Hata indicated he was pessimistic that the long-awaited visit would make any headway on the issue of Japanese relations — the future of four small islands held by Moscow's troops since the end of World War II.

Mr. Yeltsin, initially scheduled to stay three days, will arrive on the evening of Oct. 11 and leave on the afternoon of Oct. 13, according to the schedule published by the Foreign Ministry.

"The government of Japan sincerely welcomes the visit of

the President and Mrs. Yeltsin, which will further strengthen the friendly relations existing between Japan and the Russian Federation," it said.

He will have several meetings with Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa and an audience with Emperor Akihito. Talks with business leaders have been scheduled, as well as an official dinner.

Mr. Yeltsin has twice tried to visit Japan but on each occasion has had to cancel. Japanese officials have been somewhat skeptical that the latest attempt will succeed, given Mr. Yeltsin's battle for Russia's political future with diehard conservatives in the Russian parliament.

If the upcoming visit does go ahead, it will be a delicate exercise for Mr. Yeltsin, given the continuing dispute with Japan over islands in the Kuril

chain which were seized by Stalin in the last days of World War II, analysts said.

Foreign Minister Hata, quoted by the Japanese news agency Kyodo, stressed that Japan had made its "assertion" over the disputed islands: Kunashir, Iturup, Shikotan and Habomai group.

"But Russia faces difficult realities and its domestic situation may not allow progress" on the issue, he said.

Even so, more than a dozen accords would be signed during Mr. Yeltsin's visit, including an agreement confirming Japan's help to dismantle the former Soviet nuclear arsenal, Jiji Press said.

Japan and Russia would also issue a joint statement calling on North Korea to end its reported military nuclear programme, it said.

Centrist Liberal Democrats have proved their growing influence by winning two parliamentary by-elections this year, and they talk of crushing the Conservatives in the pivotal south of England at the next election, due by mid-1997.

Lack of leadership is the most common complaint about the government. Mr. Major is rated indecisive and the most unpopular prime minister of modern times by the general public.

His cause has been weakened by sniping from anti-European right-wingers, a battering from newspapers normally loyal to the Conservatives and an impressive performance by Chancellor of the Exchequer Kenneth Clarke, seen by many as the next party leader.

There was better news for Mr. Major in British newspapers Friday, with the Daily Telegraph saying former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher had agreed to help prevent a leadership challenge later this year and to join official party fund-raising efforts.

The Telegraph and the Times also reported that two key right-wing Conservative members of parliament who have been critical of Mr. Major had decided to give him a final chance to reshape his image and reassert his authority over the party.

China opens Confucius amusement park

PEKING (R) — China has opened an amusement park based on the precepts of the ancient philosopher Confucius, whose strict teachings concentrated on theories of personal responsibility and official benevolence. The Liuyi Park in Confucius' home city of Qufu in northern Shandong province boasts six sections: "Traditional rites, music, shooting, driving, reading and calculation," the official Xinhua News Agency said. "Visitors can drive cattle carts to recreate the experiences of Confucius in his travels. In the shooting section, visitors can ride on horseback in primitive forests to hunt. In the music section, visitors can enjoy ancient Chinese music," the agency said. "The new sightseeing spots and ancient-style dances add greatly to the appeal of the ongoing '93 International Confucius Cultural Festival." Xinhua said, Confucius, who lived between 551-479 B.C., is credited with establishing the philosophical basis of the traditional Chinese state. The influence of his teachings has been widely felt throughout Asia but he was vilified by China's Communist Party in a campaign in the early 1970s.

Mind your language, new EC MPs told

BRUSSELS (R) — The European Parliament began the second day of its first session in its ultra-modern Brussels home with a touch of linguistic trouble. One of the members got his feet to take part in a debate on development cooperation only to be told the interpreter were not authorised to pass in words of wisdom on to his colleagues because he was speaking a non-European Community language. "You are speaking Galician which is not one of the nine official languages. Please stop," Parliament President Eglio Klepsch said. Galician is close to Portuguese and is spoken in the Spanish autonomous region of Galicia. The humble member continued his speech in an authorised language.

English judges to retain traditional wigs

LONDON (R) — England's judges and other members of the legal profession will be keeping their traditional horsehair wigs, which date back to the 18th century, the country's chief justices said. In a joint statement the lord chancellor, Lord MacKay, and the lord chief justice, Lord Taylor, said consultations on whether to abolish the tradition had shown "strong support for maintaining the status quo." Lord Taylor, who was personally in favour of abolishing the wigs, said, "I have accepted the strength of feeling among the public, court users and judges as shown by recent consultation exercises that traditional dress should remain." Reform of the dress code for judges had been urged by several leading members of the profession in an attempt to make the judiciary more "user-friendly" and less intimidating. The joint statement said 52 organisations and individuals had responded to the consultation process. For daily court dress, 67 per cent were in favour of retaining the present form. Only 15 per cent wanted to abolish all aspects of the dress.

Writer apologises for book on Filipino virgins

MANILA (R) — An Australian author has apologised to Filipinos for a book which caused a storm in Manila by describing how to obtain virgin wives and husbands from the Philippines. "It was not my intention to upset any citizen of your country," author Kenneth Morgan, from Perth, said in a letter to the Philippine embassy in Australia. A copy of the letter was released to reporters in Manila. "I hereby unreservedly apologise to the Filipino people for any hurt I have unintentionally caused," said the 64-year-old author of the book "War Of The Sexes." The Philippine Congress has been debating how to stop the trafficking of Filipino women for alleged prostitution in Brunei, other Asian countries and Europe. Congresswoman Andrea Domingo denounced the book in May as degrading to Filipinos for telling readers how to find Filipino men and women and the costs of bringing them to Australia. "I am not ordering any more copies of the book to be printed in Australia or elsewhere," Mr. Morgan, who is married to a Filipino, was quoted as saying.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Police stop Nigerian protest

LAGOS (R) — Lagos police fired teargas and arrested 39 pro-democracy activists, including their leader Beko Ransome-Kuti, Friday to prevent a rally to demand the restoration of full democracy in Nigeria, witnesses said. Protesters tried to gather in the Lagos district of Yaba for a rally to mark the end of a three-day protest to force the military-appointed interim government to cede power to the winner of an annulled June presidential election. "The police shot teargas. They used horse whips on people. They marched in column formation, sending everybody off the road," Owei Lakemba, an official of the Campaign for Democracy (CD) umbrella group, told Reuters. "In all 39 people were arrested." Mr. Lakemba said those arrested included CD Chairman Ransome-Kuti, House of Representatives Member Tokumbo Afikuyomi and Fredrick Fafehun, a former presidential hopeful of the Social Democratic Party (SDP).

Death toll rises in Sri Lanka fighting

COLOMBO (R) — The death toll after four days of fierce fighting in a major government offensive into Sri Lanka's rebel-held northern Jaffna peninsula has risen to nearly 400, military sources said Friday. They said about 150 troops, 200 Tamil rebels and 40 civilians had been killed in the fighting. The air force continued to bomb rebel positions and helicopter gunships strafed targets under heavy resistance from the rebels. Troops began advancing again Friday morning soon after dawn but found the going difficult as they were attacked from all sides by rebels entrenched there. The sources said troops had been unable to advance very far Friday in the face of heavy mortar fire across open plains but the operation was continuing. A Defence Ministry statement said 200 rebels, including nine area leaders, and 114 soldiers had been killed in three days of heavy fighting, and 248 soldiers wounded.

Killers spurn S. Africa's peace month

JOHANNESBURG (R) — South Africa's men of violence spurned the nation's first peace month, killing at least 470 people in September. "If the intention of peace month was to curb the killings, then it has failed," Saeeda Sadek, national director of the watchdog Human Rights Commission told Reuters Friday. In the final 24 hours of peace month, a black couple were shot dead and their seven-year-old son was wounded by a gunman who burst into their Brakpan home, east of Johannesburg. Two white Johannesburg men were shot dead by killers who made no attempt to steal their car or belongings. A black train commuter was killed in Soweto. Police have so far made no arrests. The only day the month's slaughter slowed was on Peace Day, on Sept. 2, when South Africans of all races held hands and prayed for an end to the killing. Meanwhile Siskei prosecutor Willem Jurgens said Thursday the military ruler of the homeland, Brigadier Oupa Gqozo, will face charges of murder relating to the killing of rebel Charles Sebe. "I received the review papers this morning. I have read them.... I have decided it doesn't change by opinion and I will be proceeding to prosecute Brigadier Gqozo on a charge of murder...." Mr. Jurgens told Reuters by telephone from the homeland's capital Bisho. Mr. Jurgens is an independent-minded official whose position predates the March 1990 coup in which Gen. Gqozo seized power.

Brushfire rages on in California

SANTA YNEZ, California (R) — Weary fire crews chased a raging wildfire away from ranches owned by Michael Jackson and other celebrities Thursday but the blaze grew to 32,000 acres as it roared into a remote mountain wilderness. Firefighters were beginning to get the upper hand on the fire, which was 35 per cent contained, but there was no word on when they might bring it fully under control. "We're making progress," said a spokesman for the U.S. Forestry Service. More than 3,200 firefighters were battling the brushfire in the Los Padres National Forest, an area about 100 miles northwest of Los Angeles where a number of Hollywood stars keep homes and ranches. Firefighters were successful over night in erecting firebreaks to steer the flames away from Santa Ynez, the site of Jackson's Neverland Ranch and other celebrity estates. "The closest one would be Michael Jackson's place and the fire was about three miles away," said forestry spokesman Manuel Madrigal. "We understand they did evacuate some of his animals, horses and whatever he had there." Actress Bo Derek helped Hollywood columnist Rona Barrett secure her horses as the smoke and flames became visible at their properties.

Croats expel refugees from Mostar; kill 2 — U.N.

SARAJEVO (R) — Bosnian Croat forces shot dead two Muslim refugees in a group of nearly 400 they expelled under fire from the disputed Bosnian city of Mostar, a United Nations military spokesman said Friday.

According to reports from U.N. military observers, 374 old people, women and children were made to walk across the frontline to the Muslim enclave on east bank of the River Neretva.

"It is reported that HVO (Bosnia Croat) troops fired at them as they left the HVO lines and two were killed," spokesman Colonel Bill Aikman told reporters.

The HVO and the Muslims have been battling for control of Mostar since their alliance against the Serbs broke down earlier this year and turned into a scramble for territory ahead of a possible peace settlement.

The commander of the Bosnian army, Rasim Delic, Thursday declared a unilateral ceasefire in Mostar, which lies halfway between Sarajevo and the Adriatic coast, and in other areas of Bosnia where his forces are confronting the Croats.

Col. Aikman said the cease-

fire appeared to be holding so far, although the Muslim part of Mostar was hit by 18 shells before the truce came into force.

Col. Aikman also reported the Croat section on the west side of town came under fire during the day, although this time U.N. troops in the area believed the shooting was carried out by Serb gunners.

Mostar stands astride the main supply route for U.N. convoys setting off from the coast to central Bosnia, but the route has been blocked for some months by HVO checkpoints and a blown-up bridge a short distance to the north at Bijela.

Col. Aikman said the U.N. had tried to persuade the HVO to allow a repair mission through to the bridge, but they had been denied access.

"They regard that bridge as strategically significant. It would be the road by which the BH (Bosnian) army would bring in supplies and reinforcements to Mostar's eastern side if that road were fixed and that bridge were fixed," Col. Aikman said.

"They are not going to let it be rebuilt. It's as simple as that."

Internal battle over, U.K. Labour eyes power

BRIGHTON, England (R) — Britain's opposition Labour Party, fresh from a narrow vote curbing influence of trade unions, has sought to put internal battles behind it and focus on winning the next election.

Home affairs spokesman Tony Blair, echoing a widespread feeling of relief among the party hierarchy, said: "I think the wounds will heal pretty quickly. I think this allows the Labour Party to unite behind a strong and determined leader."

The party's annual conference in this southern coastal resort voted by 47.5 per cent to 44.4 Wednesday to end the union block vote in the selection of parliamentary candidates and replace it with one member, one vote.

With undisguised glee, party leader John Smith said afterwards: "I believe the tide of opinion is running in our favour."

Mr. Smith had staked his authority on the reform, arguing that the image of a party dominated by unions for a century had contributed to Labour's defeat in the past four elections.

"Now we can put constitutional matters aside and get on with the major issues of getting full employment, improving social services, fighting against VAT (value added tax) increases and preparing for victory in the next election."

Although a general election

is not due for more than three years, many political analysts believe Labour has been too absorbed with internal differences to capitalise on the problems of a Conservative government torn by disunity and lurching from crisis to crisis.

Prime Minister John Major, who could face a rough ride from dissidents at his own party conference next week, was predictably quick to pour scorn on Mr. Smith's victory.

Mr. Major said: "It's policy that people care about and as far as policy is concerned the unions are still calling the tune and John Smith is receiving the message on his knees."

The knife-edge vote was a symbolic triumph for Smith over the unions who will still wield power at policy-making conferences and on the ruling National Executive Committee.

The outcome was in doubt until the last moment when one big union decided to abstain and party transport spokesman John Prescott — a man respected in the trade union movement — electrified the conference with a rumbustious speech of support for Mr. Smith's proposals.

Senior party officials were delighted with the result, arguing that a defeat would have wounded Mr. Smith and left him as a lame duck leader.

"This will put the issue behind us," said Labour trade and industry spokesman Robin

Cook.

Mr. Major's government has been buffeted by a series of crises since winning last year's general election, facing ministerial resignations, party mutinies over the European Community, the longest recession for more than half a century and a series of "policy U-turns."

Critics say Mr. Smith, a Scottish barrister who is a crisp and effective parliamentarian, has still not come up with solid alternative strategies for dealing with the economic and social problems of a country where one in 10 workers are jobless, rising crime is a major concern and disillusionment with politicians is widespread.

Mr. Smith, chief moderniser in the battle with the traditionalists, sees the need to forge a party in the social democratic mould that could win over middle class voters in the next election, due in 1997.

With Wednesday's drama behind them, the 1,500 delegates turned to more routine business Thursday with debates on foreign policy, defence and constitutional affairs.

Meanwhile, Mr. Major will place his future as British prime minister in the hands of Conservative activists from across the country, the people he believes understand him best, at his party's annual conference in Blackpool next week.

Mr. Major and party officials believe four days of debate will show he remains in control of government policy and confirm he is the man to lead the Conservatives into the next election.

But if Mr. Major fails to rouse the 5,000 delegates, his days could well be numbered and the turmoil in his party, which has sent its popularity into a tailspin, would be set to continue.

"The mood is obviously one of concern but the overwhelming majority of the party is extremely keen for the conference to succeed," said one party official. "I believe if we collectively do our bit it will all go down very well."

Conservative conferences are usually no more than a rally where ministers are cheered and debates sporadically interrupt drinks parties and meetings with old friends.

But this year the largely middle class delegates meet in an atmosphere of gloom and anger at the government's perceived incompetence, caused by 18 months of disaster since the party won its fourth successive election in April 1992.

The Conservatives are still trying to patch up divisions over Mr. Major's desire for closer ties with Europe, which caused probably the biggest split in the party for more than 20 years.

Labour leads the govern-

ment by 15 points in opinion

NEWS IN BRIEF

Becker sees new life after baby

SYDNEY (AFP) — Triple Wimbledon champion Boris Becker is expecting major changes in his life, including less tennis, with the birth of his first child due in January. The German star is here to prepare for next week's Australian Indoor Championships and spoke of the decisions that confront him in the coming months. "I haven't made up my mind about (playing) the Davis Cup (in the future), but I won't be down for the Australian Open as my fiancée, Barbara, will be expecting our first child then," Becker said Friday. "I don't know how I will handle the situation. It's obviously going to change my life very much. "It probably will affect the number of tournaments I will play in, but it's the biggest thrill of my life so far." Becker confirmed earlier this week that he would stand by his controversial decision not to play this year's Davis Cup competition despite Germany reaching the final against Australia with a 5-0 drubbing of Sweden.

Fendick, Martinez struggle through

LEIPZIG, Germany (AP) — Patty Fendick of the United States and Spain's Conchita Martinez struggled to win Thursday, advancing to the quarterfinals at the Volkswagen Card Cup. Germany's Barbara Rittner, who ousted Stephanie Rattier of the Netherlands 6-2, 6-3, was the only unseeded player to survive among the final eight players. She will face Austria's Judith Wiesner, a 2-6, 7-5, 6-4 winner over Andrea Strnadova of the Czech Republic. But Martinez, ranked fifth in the world, needed one hour, 45 minutes to outbattle Germany's Marketa Kochta, 3-6, 6-4, 6-2. Kochta is ranked 113.

'Fortuna' withdraws from Whitbread race

LONDON (R) — A broken mizzen mast has forced the withdrawal of the Spanish yacht 'Fortuna' from the annual Whitbread Round the World Race, the organisers said Thursday. 'Fortuna', skippered by Englishman Lawrie Smith, is heading for the southern English port of Southampton, where 14 yachts set out from last Saturday on the 32,000-mile race expected to take about nine months. The damaged yacht, which is due to arrive in Southampton early next week, lost its mizzen mast just 24 hours into the race but decided late Wednesday to turn back, the Whitbread organisers said in a statement. Leading the field on the 6,000-mile first leg of the race across the Atlantic to Punta Del Este, Uruguay, is the yacht 'Tokio', a joint Japanese-New Zealand entry. The organisers said that with just over 4,800 miles to go, the New Zealand yacht 'Endeavour' was in second place, 'Winston' of the United States was third with 'Yamaha' of New Zealand fourth and the Spanish yacht 'Galicia 93 Pescanova' fifth.

McCoist boost for Rangers

GLASGOW (AFP) — Ally McCoist, Scottish football's leading scorer last season, is ready to return for Rangers at Raith Saturday and so provide a welcome boost for the beleaguered champions. Knocked out of the European Cup in midweek, they have taken just nine points from their first eight games without the considerable services of McCoist, who has been sidelined for five months with a broken leg. The 31-year-old Scottish international has made just one reserve outing since his injury, but is considered fit enough to face Raith. He is set to team up again with Mark Hateley, but three other Scottish internationals — left-back David Robertson, midfielder Stuart McCall and centre-back Dave McPherson — are unlikely starters through injury.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
& TAMMAM HIRSHI
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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

- Q.1—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠KQ4 ♠K9542 06 ♠8752
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♥ Pass
3 ♠ Pass ?
What action do you take?
- Q.2—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠A88 ♠A9 ♠KQ92 ♠Q1082
Partner opens the bidding with one no trump. What do you respond?
- Q.3—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠K9 ♠A10 ♠KQ87 ♠A8J3
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
2 NT Pass 4 NT Pass
? NT Pass 4 NT Pass
—20-22 HCP
- Q.4—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠AQJ104 ♠7832 0J64 ♠5
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass
2 ♠ Pass ?
What do you bid now?
- Q.5—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠KQ6 ♠873 ♠9643 ♠A72
Partner opens the bidding with one heart. What do you respond?
- Q.6—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠AQJ986 ♠KQ10 0J8 ♠AJ
Partner opens the bidding with one club. What do you respond?

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Martina Navratilova will have her eyes set on a record 10th Wimbledon title

Navratilova to quit in a year

NEW YORK (AFP) — American tennis star Martina Navratilova announced she will play singles for just one more year.

Navratilova went public with her decision while promoting the Virginia Slims Championships, in which she competes between November 15 and 21 at Madison Square Garden.

The 36-year-old winner of 18 Grand Slam singles titles and arguably the greatest female player ever said she had no intention of playing singles part-time. But she intends to continue her doubles career.

Her retirement will be the end of an incredible era since her first major win at Wimbledon in 1978.

The world's third ranked player has won 165 singles titles, but only four this year.

She has not won a Grand Slam title in three years, when she picked up her ninth Wimbledon crown against surprise finalist Zina Garrison.

"Chances are next year will be my last year playing full-time," she said after losing the Virginia Slims Championships final to Monica Seles last November. Now, she

apparently has pushed back her timetable another year.

It could be said the Czech-born player pushed the women's game to higher levels during the last 15 years with her strict diet and rigorous training schedules.

Her professionalism and dedication, plus a natural attacking serve-volley style, have brought her a haul of titles which few will ever equal.

Navratilova has won Wimbledon nine times, the U.S. Open four times, the Australian Open three times and the French Open twice.

Top fillies well drawn in Arc field

PARIS (R) — Top fillies had the luck of the draw Friday when final runners and riders were announced for Sunday's Prix De L'arc De Triomphe.

Low numbers are generally considered best, especially in heavy ground, for the 12-furlong (2.4-km) test and pre-race favourite Wemys Bight was drawn four of the 23 runners.

Wemys Bight, one of four runners for top French trainer Andre Fabre, will have the assistance of Pat Eddery. Successful in the Irish Oaks, Wemys Bight has been quoted 4-1 favourite with French Derby winner Hernandez, the mount of Cash Asmussen, but less well drawn at 13.

French Oaks winner Shemaka, owned by the Aga Khan, was drawn three with last year's Arc runner-up User Friendly, another filly, on the rails in stall one.

Armiger, second in the English St Leger to Bob's Return, was drawn two with French longshot Dancienne at five and Bright Moon, another runner for Fabre, at six.

Short cheered by successful defence

LONDON (R) — Briton Nigel Short accomplished his goal of consolidating his defences, gaining a valuable draw with the black pieces in game 11 of his world title chess challenge against Garry Kasparov Thursday.

Short, 28, was in buoyant mood at a post-game news conference, answering questions openly and with good humour.

Kasparov, 30, was subdued after his first poor performance with the usually deadly advantage of the first move, and said that he had overestimated his chances, spoiling a good position by insufficiently subtle play.

For the first time in the 24-game series Short had pressed for a win when playing black, gradually outplaying the champion from an apparently passive position.

Short, who forced Kasparov into time pressure, admitted that he had tried to speed up his play. "It is not so easy with such complicated games. You have to find a good rhythm, but yes, it was a conscious decision (to speed up)," Short said.

Asked to comment on the

fact that their official numerical rankings predicted an 8-3 advantage to Kasparov — the current score in the match — Short poked fun at world chess body FIDE.

"I believe the expected score is 5½ to 5½ since we have the same rating — zero," Short joked, a reference to the fact that FIDE stripped both players of their rankings as part of the dispute that led the players to form the breakaway Professional Chess Association (PCA).

Short insisted he was not feeling the ill effects of the gruelling marathon match, which has been unusually hard-fought.

"I feel fine. It is a tough match, a long match and of course quite exhausting, but I am absolutely OK," Short said.

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Lewis-Bruno: The bout Britain has dreamed of for a century

CARDIFF, Wales (AP) — It sounds like pure fiction Two British boxers fighting for the World Heavyweight Title at a rugby stadium in Wales.

It doesn't matter that one of them, Lennox Lewis was raised in Canada and fought as a Canadian when he won an Olympic gold medal.

He called himself a Brit when the World Boxing Council handed him their title. And he was British when he defended it against Tony Tucker in May.

Early Saturday, he comes up against another London-born fighter, Frank Bruno, for a fight Britain has dreamed of for a century.

Some 30,000 British fight fans will be at Cardiff Arms Park for a 12 am showdown, scheduled so late so that HBO can televise it at a popular hour on the east coast of the United States.

In Britain, the fight is technically on Saturday, stateside

it's Friday night.

It's third time lucky for Bruno, a 31-year-old comparative veteran who will be in his 40th pro fight. Two of his three defeats were in world title fights against Tim Witherspoon, an 11th round knockout in 1986, and against Mike Tyson, a fifth round knockout in 1989.

He has a big right hand capable of knocking out anyone in the world. But his lack of mobility and suspect chin make him an ideal target for the unbeaten Lewis.

Bruno has recently been receiving fitness training from Keith Morton and calls him his conditioning "guru." It will not be lost on Lewis that Morton is a national Karate champion. "Everything's going beautiful, fitting like a Jigsaw puzzle," Bruno said. According to Morton, the training, which does include karate, improves Bruno's speed and coordination. One of his heavy

points.

"It makes him stronger in his mind and far more aggressive," Morton said. "But I've reduced the karate in the last few weeks just to avoid confusion and keep his mind on the job."

Thursday's weigh-in revealed Bruno weighed nine extra pounds. The challenger scaled 238 pounds (107.9 kilos) compared with the champion's 229 (103.7 kilos).

The question is, whether it is nine pounds of extra power or nine pounds more to haul around the ring.

The fight is likely to have little interest outside Britain. Which has gained notoriety over the decades for producing losing — some say horizontal — heavyweights.

The prize money is \$8 million, with Bruno receiving \$1.5 million for what would almost certainly be his last fight should he lose.

Australia aims for drug free Olympics

SYDNEY (R) — Australia plans to usher in a new era of drug-free sport when Sydney hosts the 2000 Olympics.

But there are still many hurdles to clear, according to Steve Haynes, chief executive of the Australian Sports Drug Agency (ASDA), which is seen as a world leader in combating drug use in sports.

ASDA's policy of testing athletes for drugs all year round should be adopted worldwide by 2000, Haynes told Reuters in an interview Thursday.

He said the recent decision by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and sports federations to standardise dope testing will lead to the adoption of the Australian model of testing athletes during training or in competition at any time of the year.

"We (ASDA) believe the Sydney Games will be different because up until now drug testing has really only taken place at the time of the games," he said.

"What we will see more and more as Sydney 2000 approaches is year-round continuous testing programmes on a world wide basis. So not only are we saying that athletes will be clean at the time of the Games, but that they were clean in their preparation, that is going to be the major difference," Haynes said.

He said eliminating drug use in sport still had a long way to go in some countries such as

the United States. There, track and field administrators drug test athletes, a system that is open to compromise.

While accepting the system was not necessarily corrupt, he cited eminent U.S. sports doctor Robert Voy, who said: "Having sport run the testing programme is like having a fox guard the hen house."

Haynes, a biochemist and former English county cricketer, said the IOC had been criticised in the past for testing athletes only during the two-week Olympic competition and not before or after the games.

Top Olympic official Prince Alexandre de Merode said in January about 10 per cent of athletes frequently used drugs and out-of-competition controls were insufficient.

Haynes said it was hard to assess the level of drug use in sport, but added only five athletes tested positive at the 1992 Barcelona Games, down from the 10 who tested positive at the Seoul Olympics in 1988.

He said harmonising the rules and regulations of about 30 sports was not going to be easy, and only some of the benefits would be seen before the Atlanta Olympics in 1996.

ASDA, a government-funded agency, is under contract to carry out random drug tests on Australian basketball, soccer and rugby players as well as the country's track and field athletes.

Haynes said that since the agency started up five years ago the number of positive tests it reported had gone down from 70 to last year's five.

He said ASDA was also involved in publicity to combat the use of drugs internationally.

With the spotlight on Australia for the next seven years and with many athletes arriving to compete in sports events leading up to the 2000 Games, Haynes believes ASDA's publicity job will gradually become easier.

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Palestinians seek to disengage from Israeli economy and link with Arabs

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Simultaneous with building infrastructure in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, the Palestinians will seek to disengage themselves from the economy of the occupying power and reengage with the economies of Jordan and other Arab countries, a senior Palestinian economic planner says.

Samir Abdullah, one of the Palestinian peace negotiators with Israel and a member of the team to multilateral talks on regional economic cooperation, admits that it is going to be a tough process, given the tough binds that Israel has imposed on the Palestinian economy since seizing the West Bank and Gaza Strip in the 1967 war.

However, Dr. Abdullah, an associated professor of economics at Al Najah University in the West Bank, believes that disengagement from Israel could be achieved if the Palestinians play their cards right.

For one thing, Dr. Abdullah told the Jordan Times last week, the Palestinians will insist on their right to independent decisions in the utilisation of international assistance expected to be pumped into the occupied territories to support the Palestinian autonomy envisaged under the agreement signed between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) on Sept. 13.

"It does not mean that we will be denying opportunities to the donor countries or the World Bank," said Dr. Abdullah shortly before his departure for Washington to attend a donors' conference held Friday. "We welcome their supervisory role and believe that we could greatly benefit from their expertise and technology."

But, he added, "we want to

have our right to independent choice free from pressure from any quarters."

The issue of who will control and channel the aid was expected to spark a heated debate.

Washington is known to favour strong World Bank monitoring of the appropriation of the funds under the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) — a situation that will suit Israel since it will be able to exercise influence and secure a large portion of the economic action.

The European Community (EC) has said that, in view of community member states' close involvement in the Middle East and its record of financial assistance to the countries of the region, it should assume a leading role in rebuilding the West Bank and Gaza (Britain, despite being an EC member, is believed to support the American position, while France is a strong advocate of an EC dominance in this context).

In their pursuit of economic disengagement from Israel, the Palestinians will also shun joint projects with the Jewish state not only in the interim infrastructure-building process, but also in the medium and long terms, Dr. Abdullah said.

He confirmed that the Palestinian leadership was calling on businessmen and industrial entrepreneurs in the occupied territories to stay away from involving Israeli firms in joint ventures.

"In any case, joint ventures with Israelis are impossible before the conclusion of a comprehensive peace agreement," Dr. Abdullah said, adding that the Palestinians were aware "of a growing interest in Israeli business circles" to engage in the rebuilding of the occupied territories.

The economist said, however, that he believed that Israeli firms, whose cost of production is definitely higher than their counterparts in Jordan, Syria and Lebanon, will not be able to offer competitive prices.

In the medium and long term, "our decisions will be based on our strategic economic interests and definite trade and cooperation agreements, and this will apply not only to Israel but all other countries in the region," he said.

Dr. Abdullah's colleague in the economic planning and negotiating team, Dr. Samir Huleib, said last week that the Palestinians "would not accept becoming a Trojan horse for Israeli economic supremacy in the Arab World in the post-peace era."

He also categorically ruled out Israeli companies playing a role in the "public sector infrastructure investment programme" during the interim period.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has told his cabinet that the Palestinians should be allowed to take the initiative in joint economic projects during the interim period to avoid charges that the Jewish state is seeking to maintain economic control of the occupied territories.

"It was agreed... (during a cabinet meeting on Sept. 26)... that it is desirable that proposals come from (the Palestinians) rather than us, due to their suspicions that we seek to dominate them," Israeli Economics Minister Shimon Shetret told Israel Television. If adhered to, the Israeli stand could go a long way in reassuring the Palestinians.

Dr. Abdullah did not directly comment on the surprising Israeli stand, but indicated that the Palestinians have to remain alert and keep close focus on their priorities and preferences.

He pointed out that the cost of living was very high in Israel and the occupied territories when compared to their immediate neighbours and the Palestinians were "paying a high price" for the imposed linkage of their economy with that of the Jewish state.

Once the Palestinians are able to set up their own projects and impose "measures to protect" their economic sectors, the cost of living will come down, he said.

The professor estimated the per capita income of the Palestinians in the occupied territories at \$1,200 compared with \$10,000 of the Israelis.

Such a disparity is cited by regional and international economic experts as one of the key dissuading factors that would influence any move towards post-peace Palestinian-Israeli economic integration beyond the Israeli concept of the occupied territories as a major market for Israeli products and a conduit to the Arab markets.

"Our priority is to reduce our dependence on the Israeli economy and to reengage ourselves with the Arab World," said Dr. Abdullah, noting that economic logic, if nothing else, prompts the Palestinians to turn to the Arabs rather than the Israelis.

"It is going to be tough," he said. "But we do not find any reason why Israel should not agree to our position."

In any case, if the idea of the peace process to let the Palestinians assume control of their lives and affairs, then it is only natural that Israel should let go of its stranglehold on the Palestinian economy, he said, implying that international pressure was one of the weapons that the Palestinians would use to achieve their objective.



Women grieve Friday over the bodies of relatives when a massive earthquake hit Maharashtra state who were killed in Kiliari village, Latar district, in pre-dawn hours Thursday (AFP photo)

Lockerbie resolution ahead, but pressure eased on Libya

Combined agency dispatches

UNITED NATIONS — Britain, France, and the United States tabled a draft resolution Friday calling for tighter sanctions against Libya because of its failure to hand over the two Lockerbie bombing suspects.

Diplomats delivered the text of the draft resolution to the U.N. secretary general's office shortly before 11 a.m. (1500 GMT) Friday.

But they said they were not pressing for an immediate Security Council vote on the resolution, which would freeze Libyan assets abroad and halt delivery of some oil industry equipment to Tripoli.

"We have tabled the resolution today. That is pressure," British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd told journalists. Britain, France and the United States had set Friday as the deadline for a handover of two Libyans suspected of bombing a Pan Am airliner over Lockerbie, Scotland, in December 1988, killing 270 people.

Libya took a step closer to compliance Wednesday when it said it would allow the two to stand trial in Scotland.

The same day, Libyan Foreign Minister Omar Al Muntasir said after meeting with U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali that it would be

impossible to hand the two over by Friday, but that he hoped a timetable for the handover would be finalised Thursday.

But a scheduled further meeting between the two men on Thursday failed to materialise, apparently because the Libyans were waiting for instructions from Tripoli that never came, a U.N. spokesman said.

It was not clear if a meeting would take place Friday.

The three countries were not pushing for immediate discussion or adoption of the resolution for new sanctions in the hope of receiving some further response from Libya, diplomats here said.

"We're not pressing for its adoption but we're putting it there for discussion," said France's ambassador, Jean-Bernard Merimee.

Asked when France would start pressing for the resolution's adoption, Mr. Merimee told reporters, "we haven't set a time limit."

Mr. Merimee explained the delay by citing "good will" and "encouraging words" from Libya.

The Security Council imposed an air and arms embargo and diplomatic sanctions on Libya in 1992 to pressure it to turn over the suspects.

No outright ban on oil im-

ports from Libya was planned, because of objections from Europeans who buy much of Libya's 1.5 million barrels a day in exports. In addition, the freeze on Libya's assets abroad does not apply to the proceeds from future oil sales.

The new sanctions would be unlikely to have much effect on Libya's \$9 billion a year in revenue from petroleum exports.

Alleged intelligence agents Abdul Basset Ali Megrahi and Lamen Khalifa Fhimah are charged in Britain and the United States with carrying out the bombing.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher said Thursday that whatever the Libyans tell the secretary-general, "we ought to go ahead and table the resolution to sort of keep the pressure on."

He expressed scepticism that the Libyans would cooperate, telling reporters in New York, "we've been disappointed in this arena before, and we would want to look at the fine print."

Iran said Western pressure on Libya would not end even if it handed the suspects over. State-run Tehran Radio said Western countries were keeping the crisis alive in order to force Tripoli to change its regional and international policies.

Israel, PLO clash over hunt for Palestinian activists

OCUPPED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Israel's military chief pledged Friday to hunt down Palestinian guerrillas in the occupied territories even though arrests of wanted activists has already provoked the first clash between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) over their autonomy agreement.

"We will continue to pursue the Palestinians who are directly implicated in serious attacks against Israelis and Palestinians," Israel's military chief of staff, General Ehud Barak, told Israel Radio Friday.

"These wanted people must be put behind bars until the situation becomes clear," Gen. Barak had told journalists in Tel Aviv on Thursday.

It is better for the Palestinians and it is better for us," he said following Wednesday's arrest of six fighters from the Black Panthers, the armed wing of Fateh, the main PLO group.

One of those caught was Black Panther leader Ahmad Awad Kamil, sought for the past three years for a series of killings of Israelis and Palestinians.

His arrest provoked a wave of anger among Palestinian leaders and a shut-down strike on the West Bank on Thursday.

Fateh movement called a commercial strike in the West

Bank on Thursday to protest against the arrests.

Ahmad Irshad, a Fateh leader in the West Bank, told Reuters: "People were astonished by the Israeli army behaviour, especially since Fateh had already announced a ceasefire."

He said the Black Panthers declared a ceasefire with the army after PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat renounced violence and urged his supporters to stop attacks on Israelis as part of the peace deal.

Gen. Barak said the arrested members of the Black Panthers were responsible for killing not only Israelis but many Palestinians suspected as informers for Israel.

He said their capture was "good for Palestinian society and good for our (Israeli) society."

Palestinian leaders Sari Nusseibeh and Ziyad Abu Zayad said the arrest of the Black Panthers was "a provocation" and harmed peace efforts between the PLO and Israel.

Bassam Abu Sharif, political adviser to Mr. Arafat, told Friday's Al Quds newspaper in East Jerusalem that the hunt was "a flagrant violation of the agreement by the Israeli army."

According to Israeli Radio, 19 armed Palestinian militants in the Jenin area, where the Black Panthers were caught, are on the wanted list.

The daily published Mr. Kamil's final interview three days before his capture.

"Our group has decided to halt military operations in line with instructions from the Palestinian leadership," he said.

"The Fateh Hawks on the Gaza Strip has received the same instructions. We are the PLO soldiers in the territories and have to obey orders."

"We hoped that after Israel and the PLO recognised each other that our problem would be automatically solved. What use is a political solution if the problem of the wanted men and prisoners is not solved?" he asked.

The Israelis have admitted that Fateh has called off armed attacks on Israeli targets since the accord was signed on Sept. 13.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has even given the PLO "a good conduct" award and Environment Minister Yossi Sarid has noted that the PLO had not carried out any "terrorist" action. Muslim fundamentalists were behind the latest shooting and killings.

But Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin said Israel had given no undertaking in the accord to call off the hunt of wanted Palestinians. The declaration of principles and letters of recognition made no mention of the fate of wanted Palestinians

and prisoners.

Friday's Haaretz newspaper quoted as Israeli minister, who refused to be named, saying: "There is an unwritten agreement for the army to stop hunting political militants in Fateh and we will have to start negotiations to settle the problem of those who took part in the armed struggle."

Jews questioned

Israeli police have questioned three Jews on suspicion of inciting civil rebellion against the Palestinian autonomy agreement, a spokesman said.

Police ministry spokesman Rafi Levy confirmed the investigation of Yehuda Etzion, Rabbi Oded Kitov and Rabbi Mordechai Karpel on suspicion they authored a leaflet calling for rebellion.

Mr. Etzion, jailed in the past for membership of a Jewish underground group that killed and maimed Arabs, said in a radio interview Wednesday he stood behind the call to rebel.

"I am perhaps incriminating myself according to the laws by which the present regime protects itself..."

"But our whole claim is that the current regime, its values and laws, cannot be a barrier anymore to a new force that wants to conquer the hearts of the people."

Pakistani soldier dies in Somalia

Combined agency dispatches

MOGADISHU — A Pakistani U.N. soldier has died of wounds he sustained in an attack by Somali militiamen, bringing the death toll among U.N. troops in Mogadishu to 65, a U.N. military spokesman said Friday.

The soldier, Major Tarik Sherif, died in a Nairobi hospital on Thursday, three days after the armoured personnel carrier he was standing by the gun point inside was ambushed by the gunmen.

At least 35 Pakistani soldiers have been killed in the Somali capital, 33 of them in fighting. The killing of 23 Pakistanis on June 5 was blamed on Somali warlord Mohammed Farah Aideded, now declared a wanted man by the United Nations.

Another Pakistani soldier was wounded in the same attack as Maj. Sherif.

The special U.N. representative in Somalia American

retired Admiral Jonathan Howe, was Friday in the process of moving from a prefabricated residence at the U.N. headquarters in the former U.S. embassy to a more solid new home.

A Norwegian soldier was slightly injured when a rocket struck close to Adm. Howe's former quarters early this week.

Overnight Thursday, four rockets were fired at Mogadishu airport close to the city centre, but no injuries were reported.

In other developments: — The head of the European charity Medicines Sans Frontiers (MSF — Doctors Without Borders) has accused the United Nations and the United States of committing a "humanitarian crime" in Somalia.

MSF President Rony Brauman charged that the international body and the U.S. armed forces had turned Somalia into a testbed for the "creation of a permanent military intervention force."

— U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali has warned in a letter to the United States that its withdrawal from Somalia would undermine the U.N. mission and rekindle the civil war with all its horrors.

U.N. Secretary General

Boutros Ghali has warned in a letter to the United States that its withdrawal from Somalia would undermine the U.N. mission and rekindle the civil war with all its horrors.

In a recent letter to U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, the U.N. chief said there was "no practical alternative" to the current U.N. mission in Somalia, adding that without U.S. support "our efforts will not succeed."

A U.S. withdrawal would "oblige the U.N. Security Council either to withdraw UNOSOM or surrender control of south Mogadishu to Aideded," Dr. Ghali said.

Such a situation "would condemn the people of Somalia to the resumption of civil war and all the horrors that would result," the U.N. chief said in his letter.

The 'Larnaca three' — saga of some who fought for a cause

From Michael Jansen
in Nicosia

Cyprus has released and deported one of the Palestine Liberation Organisation's (PLO) most colourful commanders, Ian Michael Davison, a British carpenter from South Shields, who along with two Palestinians killed three Israelis on a yacht moored in the Larnaca marina on Sept. 25, 1985.

The two Palestinians, Mahmoud Touqan, a native of Nablus raised in Amman, and Elias Nassif, from Beirut, were also pardoned but they remained in the central prison in Nicosia Thursday until arrangements could be made for their deportation.

The trio served eight of a 20-year-life sentence and were freed on the occasion of the 33rd anniversary of Cyprus' independence. As it is Cypriot practice to release "lifers" after they have completed about half their sentences and to give them time off for good behaviour, the men were scheduled for release this year in any case,

but Mr. Davison believes it came earlier because of the PLO-Israel accord signed at the White House on Sept. 13.

The "Larnaca three" were members of the PLO's internal security unit — Force 17. They killed Israelis Ruben Palzur, his wife Esther, and Abraham Avnery, in a bungled attempt to take hostages to exchange for 20 Palestinians seized between April and August 1985 by the Israeli navy off a cargo ship and two yachts sailing from Larnaca to South Lebanese ports. The kidnapped Palestinians were said to be members of Force 17 en route to the camps around Tyre and Sidon to take action against anti-Arafat rebels there and not to stage infiltration raids into Israel.

Mr. Davison and his companions always maintained that the Israelis were agents of Israel's external security arm, Mossad, who were monitoring ship and yacht movements from the Larnaca port and marina, a claim Israel has vigorously denied. Israel retaliated for the murders with an air raid against

PLO headquarters in Tunis, killing 60 Palestinians and 25 Tunisians.

Mr. Davison, now 35, joined the PLO in 1983. He was deeply angered by Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon, and particularly by the massacre of Palestinian civilians in the camps of Sabra and Shatila in September of that year. He plunged into the fight for survival waged by the PLO, and by its Chairman Yasser Arafat, personally, against Syrian-sponsored Palestinian dissidents who forced PLO fighters to withdraw from northern Lebanon at the end of 1983.

Unable to fire a gun or to understand orders given in Arabic, Mr. Davison survived the battles round Tripoli and was evacuated with other fighters to Yemen where he remained until he was recruited into Force 17 and assigned the task of guarding Mr. Arafat. Fair and blond, Mr. Davison was photographed with "the Old Man" during his travels round the Arab World to the Briton, who had assumed the name "George Hanna," was

quickly recognised soon after surrendering to the Cypriot police.

During his eight years in prison, Mr. Davison perfected his Arabic and learnt German. Although a school dropout who apprenticed himself to a South Shields carpenter to become a skilled cabinet maker, Mr. Davison read literature and history voraciously, and was a member of the British Council library.

He signed up to take the O-levels he failed to pass before leaving school and wrote about 100 pages in a book about the "battle of Tripoli" and service with the PLO, but found that noisy, disruptive daily life in prison defeated his attempts to concentrate on intellectual work. Now that he is a free man he wants to "do good" somewhere in the world, perhaps by joining a voluntary agency engaged in fighting famine or disease.

Thursday morning, only hours away from his flight to freedom, Mr. Davison was full of energy and excitement.

"I plan to take a few months off, roam around and see the world a bit, to get this place (prison) out of my system," he said.

He was delighted with the PLO-Israel accord and watched the White House signing ceremony on television. "I never thought I would see the day that Arafat and Rabin would shake hands," he was convinced that the Palestinian state was on its way and did not regret giving "ten years of my life" to the Palestinian cause.

Mahmoud or Usama Touqan, who arrived in Cyprus on a Jordanian passport in the name of Abdul Hakim Saado Al Khalifa, was born in Nablus in 1961. His family moved to Amman before 1967 where his father became a shopkeeper. Mahmoud joined the resistance after leaving school at 18 and fought in Lebanon in 1982 and 1983. He claims to be a cousin of a PLO official, Samir Touqan, who was assassinated by Israeli agents in Nicosia on Dec. 15, 1979. "Elias Nassif," the leader

of the trio who travelled on a Syrian passport issued in the name of Khalid Abdul Kadir Al Khatib, claims to be a Greek Catholic, born on Christmas day 1963 in the Mar Elias camp in Beirut. He told this correspondent that his parents fled the village of Deir Hanna near Bethlehem in 1948, going first to Jordan and then to Lebanon. His father, he said, joined Fateh and was killed in 1968. Nassif said he attended the Palestinian orphanage school at Souk Al Gharb in Lebanon before joining the PLO, serving in the bodyguard of Ali Hassan-Salameh, the founder of Force 17. Although elements of his story are clearly true, the name he claims to be his own is certainly as false as was his Syrian passport.

Mr. Davison and the two Palestinians had hoped that their release would mean real freedom, particularly freedom from Israel's policy of taking revenge for Palestinian attacks on Israelis. However, the arrest in the West Bank of Fateh Black Panthers activists on the day

before their release have alerted them to watch their backs.

Although a general strike was observed in the West Bank in protest against the arrest of the Panthers and leading Jerusalemites called the Israeli action a "violation" of the PLO-Israel accord, the Israeli chief of staff, General Ehud Barak, said his forces would continue operations against wanted Palestinians until a political decision was taken by the government to cease these operations. Presumably, Mossad could also continue to target men like Mr. Davison, now free somewhere in England.

It is ironic that Israeli foreign minister Shimon Peres characterised the release of these men as "very regrettable" at precisely the same time as officers of his internal security force, Shin Bet, were holding discussions with representatives of Force 17 on how to guarantee peace and security in the occupied territories once Israel withdraws.

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Bank robber surrenders in U.S. hostage incident

NEW YORK (AP) — One member of a robbery team that held three people hostage in a Brooklyn Bank surrendered after a nine-hour standoff with police. At least one other robber remained in the bank with two of the three hostages, but police were optimistic that the episode was nearing a peaceful end, said officer Scott Bloch, a police spokesman. Police originally reported that as many as four robbers stormed the bank at 8:30 a.m. (1230 GMT) and took three bank employees hostage before a small army of police arrived on the scene. After the surrender, the number of robbers was in doubt. After hours of telephone negotiations, a suspect, identified only as a black male in his late 30s, emerged from the bank unarmed at 5:15 p.m. (2115 GMT) and immediately was arrested, Mr. Bloch said. One of the hostages apparently was released about the same time, he said. The standoff began after gunmen accosted a security guard at the Chase Manhattan branch, taking him into an area of the bank that triggered an alarm, police said. They then took two female employees hostage. The area soon was swarming with police, including sharpshooters perched on rooftops. Officers also cordoned off a dozen blocks around the bank, and ordered businesses in the normally bustling commercial district to close.

Rutskoi is still vice president in mom's eyes

KURSK, Russia (AP) — As if Alexander Rutskoi didn't have enough problems. Now his mother doesn't back his claim to Russia's presidency. Far from the standoff in Moscow, Zina Rutskoi says her Alexander is a better person than his archrival, the "shameless" Boris Yeltsin. But she's realistic about her son's official status. Is he president? "Neeeyet, nyet," she screeches. "He can be president only if (Boris) Yeltsin sings a decree letting him. How can he command anything?" she told The Associated Press in an interview at her tiny apartment in Kursk, the family's hometown 330 miles (540 kilometres) south of Moscow. Lawmakers named Mr. Rutskoi acting president last week after Yeltsin dissolved parliament. In the opinion of mother Rutskoi, Yeltsin is being "unjust and dishonest." "How many times has he mocked my son? It's terrible. And not only my son, but a lot of people. If he doesn't like them, he just clears them away." She worries about her "Sasha," who leads a band of hardliners isolated in the parliament building. He hasn't called. "Where would he call from? Everything has been cut off there (the parliament). Poor thing, he's going through so much. And I'm still going through so much," said Zina, a 65-year-old widow. Alexander is the oldest of three sons. "He would give the shirt off his back," she said. "Imagine that if somebody came asking for bread and had nothing to eat, he would give him his bread. All my sons are that way."

Nice guy finishes first at Country Music Awards

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — An ex-pop singer and avid golfer who specialises in delicate love ballads sung in an angelic tenor is on top of the country music world. Vince Gill was named the Country Music Association's Entertainer of the Year. He's a change of page from the bombastic (Garth Brooks, Hank Williams Jr.) and traditionalist (George Strait) winners of the past six years. He joins such past winners as Johnny Cash, Glen Campbell and John Denver who also started out in pop music. Gill is the former lead singer of Pure Prairie League. He once turned down an offer to tour with Dire Straits, to concentrate on his country music career. Gill, 36, said he was stunned by the Entertainer Award because he hasn't joined the current trend, led by Brooks, toward elaborate effects-laden stage productions. "I don't have the big stage show. I don't run around and do a lot of those things. I've got a killer band and it's just great singing and playing. Gill said backstage at the show broadcast live on CBS-TV from the Grand Ole Opry House.